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A

COMPARATIVE VIEW

OF

THE SOCIAL LIFE

OF

ENGLAND AND FRANCE,

FROM THE RESTORATION OF CHARLES THE SECOND,
TO THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

LONDON:
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FROM THE RESTORATION OF CHARLES THE SECOND,
TO THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

BY THE EDITOR OF

MADAME DU DEFFAND'S LETTERS.

97778

" All, all but truth, drops still-born from the Press."
POPE's *Epistle to Arbuthnot*

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PREFACE.

While the great moral principles upon which all social order in an advanced state of civilisation is necessarily formed, remain at all times nearly the same, the modifications imposed by law, or induced by custom, in different eras of society — the duties exacted by the one, and the licence often obtained by the other — produce occasional, accidental ebbs and flows in the morals as well as in the manners of private life. These form an interesting and not unuseful subject of contemplation to such minds as, in society, by an intimate acquaintance with their contemporaries, have been enlightened, not contracted; who have learnt, in and from the world, indulgence to its follies without participation in its thoughtlessness, and a severe adherence to general principles, with great lenity to individual deviations from them. It is of such characters that La Bruyère says, " Ils peuvent haïr les " hommes en général où il y a si peu de vertu,

" mais ils excusent les particuliers ; ils les aiment
" même par des motifs plus relevés, et ils s'étu-
" dient à mériter le moins qu'ils peuvent une
" pareille indulgence." (1)

Some considerations are here offered on the changes which have taken place, and the fluctuations observable in the two countries which, for above a century, may be said to have divided between them the social world of Europe. The period chosen is one from authentic sources, still within our observation. Details of more distant times, from the great scarcity of materials, would be rather addressed to the curiosity of the antiquary, than to the feelings and reflection of the general observer of human nature. Individual characters are sometimes brought forward, as the best authority for the sentiments and conduct of the period to which they belong; and sketches sometimes given of the biography of such as have been distinguished in social life, although little noticed in history.

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(1) Caractères de la Bruyère, tom. ii. p. 87.

In the instance of Mr. Pitt and Mr. Fox, their political importance and superiority was too closely interwoven with the whole tissue of their lives, to be separated from them; but in the following pages their characters are touched on, not as the leaders of political parties, but, as to the effect which those characters produced on their associates, and on the times in which they lived.

The Author has endeavoured to avoid all recapitulations of well-known circumstances, anecdotes, and characters belonging to a period so familiar to the reading world, or at least to that part of it here addressed.

All great political speculations, all military and financial details, are left to more important and more voluminous works. Nothing is here attempted but a review of social life and manners, from materials open to every one as well as to the Author, and therefore supposed to be possessed by them. To this are added some observations suggested by a long intercourse with society in both countries.

A First Volume is now offered to the public:

should it amuse the leisure of those whose more enlarged and more profound knowledge of the times recorded gives them an interest in their social details; should it assist in suggesting those associations of ideas always an agreeable exercise to the human mind, the aim of the Author is fulfilled. A Second Volume, attempting to record the changes produced, and the altered spirit prevailing in both countries subsequent to the French Revolution, might perhaps prove more interesting, from approaching nearer to our contemporaries. But if only a series of insignificant circumstances are found to be here related, all previously familiar to the reader; if these circumstances are found unaccompanied by any comment which may lead to greater and more general views of human life and character; and if they produce no speculations beyond the mere matter of fact recorded; if such is the unerring decision of that portion of the public into whose hands the following pages may fall, then the future amusement of the Author will not be further intruded on the public.

April, 1828.

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INTRODUCTION.

In considering and comparing the manners and habits, the opinions and prejudices, of England and France, it is remarkable that two nations so contiguous, so long and so intimately connected, and having always, either as friends or as enemies, seen so much of each other, should still continue so essentially dissimilar.

Like country neighbours, of uncongenial characters, we have never, during our hereditary and necessary intercourse with each other, continued long upon good terms, and have generally fallen out when any attempts have been made to increase our intimacy or unite us more closely.

Even when upon the most friendly footing, we have neither of us disliked hearing our neighbours abused, their peculiarities laughed at, and their weaknesses exaggerated, and have

seldom been disposed to do them justice, except when we conceived that we had humbled and worsted them.

The two nations may be considered as having been in a state of the most entire alienation from each other at the period of the restoration of Charles the Second. A space of twenty years, joined to our insular situation, would be more than enough, at any time, to wear out almost every vestige of foreign fashions or manners; but these intervening years had, besides, been marked by political struggles, which, in calling forth our national peculiarities, exhibited them in the greatest possible contrast to the French character of that period, not only as to religion and politics, but as to every public and private sentiment, both national and individual.

The intermediate events which took place in both countries, mutually fortified and increased all these distinctive differences. The great and decisive stand made by the English nation, first in the senate, and then in the field, against the arbitrary plans of the misguided Charles, plans, which, whether of resistance or accommodation, were always (and too truly) connected in public opinion with foreign counsels and foreign aid. The temporary settlement which took place under Cromwell; the abortive and ill-concerted

attempts subsequently made for the establishment of a republic, — all these national exertions were equally grounded upon a determined resistance to foreign interposition, and to any change in the laws and customs considered as peculiarly English. Indeed it is a circumstance which must strike all those who have looked much into our earliest annals, not in compiled histories, but in contemporary writers, and in the still subsisting records of the time, that the English seem always to have been a chosen people, for the deposit of political truth and civil liberty; not of romantic visions, impossible from the nature of man to be realised, but of plain practical doctrines, long acted upon, often opposed, sometimes reversed, always ultimately triumphant. No regularly constructed constitution of government subsisted in the times here referred to; but the common law of England, the unwritten record of time immemorial, proves that this principle of civil liberty, of individual independence, of resistance to all oppression at home, and all intervention from abroad, existed long before; and what is more remarkable, during, and in defiance of, the alternate rule of the Yorks and the Lancasters, the succession of Tudors and

of Stuarts. (1) It was, in fact, kept alive, by their successive efforts to subdue it; was enlightened, strengthened, and systematised, by the effects of the civil war, and by all the energy of mind, and excellence of understanding, which those times called forth, and was permanently established at the Revolution, which secured the throne to the house of Brunswick.

The aversion the people of England ever evinced to foreign connections was by no means shared by their princes, especially those of the race of Stuart.

The short-sighted policy, and puerile eagerness with which James the First sought the alliance, first of Austria, and then of France, by the marriage of his son, seems rather to have been the effect of early prejudice, imbibed in

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(1) This is sufficiently proved by many of the public papers in the curious selection made by the late Mr. Lysons, while keeper of the records in the Tower, where we find (among many other similar facts) Henry the Fifth, during his victorious campaign in France, receiving and answering petitions from the meanest of his subjects, complaining of encroachments on their property or rights. His letter missive to his chancellor is there preserved, desiring him to see immediate justice done to a miller, who had complained to the king of a neighbouring convent of monks having obstructed his mill-stream, and otherwise oppressed and injured him.

Scotland, which taught him always to look to a powerful connection on the Continent for support, than to any decided project for introducing the Roman Catholic religion, which in those days formed too much an *Imperium in Imperio*, to have been relished by his weak, self-sufficient, and despotic mind.

Even the letter of his son Charles to Pope Gregory the Fifteenth, which has been so frequently cited against its writer, appears rather a measure of formal civility in those punctilious times, than an intimation of that early bias, in favour of the religion of the pontiff he addresses, which was afterwards supposed to be detected in it.

In the early part of his subsequent reign there are many particulars recorded in the memoirs of the times, which exhibit the incongruity of the habits and feelings of the two nations, even while immediately connected by the marriage of Charles to Henrietta Maria. (1)

A year had not elapsed after this marriage, when the whole train of French attendants, who had accompanied the Queen from Paris, were suddenly dismissed from her service; a large

(1) She was married by proxy at Notre Dame, at Paris, on the 31st of May, 1626.

sum of money and magnificent presents (1) were distributed among them, but their immediate departure insisted on and enforced.

The letter or declaration of Charles to his brother-in-law, Louis the Thirteenth, justifies, in a very spirited and sensible manner, the conduct he had been obliged to adopt, both towards his queen and her attendants. (2) Their impertinence and arrogance, the meddling insolence of their priests, and the pretensions and complaints which they all combined in suggesting to their mistress, had become intolerable, not only to the English court, but to the King himself; to that king, the subsequent strength and unshaken constancy of whose attachment to his wife forms so conspicuous a part of his disastrous history, and an interesting excuse for some of his misconduct. (3)

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(1) They received above 11,000*l.* in money, and 20,000*l.* worth of jewels.

(2) A copy of this declaration was first published with the letters found in the king's cabinet, taken at the battle of Nasby. Whether this paper was really among them may admit of a doubt; but the parliament having it, by whatever means, in their possession, no doubt can exist of their reasons for publishing what coincided so entirely with all the popular prejudices against the queen.

(3) "The king's affection to the queen was of a very "extraordinary alloy, a composition of conscience and love,

The Marechal de Bassompierre, it is known, came as ambassador extraordinary to England, to settle these differences, or rather to insist on the re-establishment of the Queen's French household and priests. Lord Carleton, who had carried to France the letter from Charles, announcing their dismissal, was very ill received by Louis; and Montagu, who was sent soon after with a compliment on the marriage of Gaston, Duke of Orleans, the King's brother, was ordered to leave Paris immediately, without being even admitted to an audience.

The detailed account which Bassompierre

" and generosity and gratitude, and all those noble affec-
" tions which raise the passion to the greatest height; in-
" somuch as he saw with her eyes, and determined by her
" judgment; and did not only pay her this adoration, but
" desired that all men should know that he was swayed by
" her, which was not good for either of them. The queen
" was a lady of great beauty, excellent wit and humour,
" and made him a just return of noblest affections, so that
" they were the true idea of conjugal affection in the age
" in which they lived. When she was admitted to the
" knowledge and participation of the most secret affairs
" (from which she had been carefully restrained by the
" Duke of Buckingham whilst he lived), she took delight in
" the examining and discussing them, and from thence in
" making judgment of them, in which her passions were
" always strong." — *Continuation of the Life of Clarendon*, vol. i. p. 155.

gives in his memoirs of his first interview with Charles, shows how much the King was irritated at the conduct of the court of France on this occasion, and how determined he was to maintain his own dignity, and resist any foreign intervention in his affairs.

He had insisted on Bassompierre's not entering on the subject of his mission at his first public audience at Hampton Court, where the Queen was at his side, and, as the ambassador tells us, " la compagnie étoit superbe et l'ordre " exquis," but admitted him to a private interview of two hours, within three days afterwards, at the same place ; " en laquelle," Bassompierre reports to Louis the Thirteenth, " j'ai " trouvé tant de rudesses, et si peu de désir de " contenter votre majesté, que je ne m'en sçaurois " assez estonner, car après m'avoir longuement " escouté, il me dit que je n'accomplisois pas la " charge que l'on lui avoit mandé, que j'avois " de lui declarer la guerre de votre part. Je " luy dit que je n'avois pas l'office de hérault, " pour luy annoncer la guerre, mais bien celuy " de Maréchal de France, pour l'exécuter quand " votre majesté l'auroit resolue, et que jusques à " present, vous fustes avec lui comme avec un " frère. Il me dit, que si cela étoit, votre majesté " devoit le laisser en repos et en liberté en sa

" maison, en laquelle, ni vous, ni personne, n'avez
" qu'à voir que la religion de votre sœur, étoit
" assurée, que directement ni indirectement il
" ne tacheroit de luy faire changer, et qu'au
" reste, il ne vouloit pas que la reyne sa femme at-
" tendist protection d'aucun autre que de luy ;
" qu'il avoit este forcé de chasser ses officiers
" François, pour leur mauvais déportement, et
" les brigues et monopoles qu'ils faisoient en
" l'état, qu'ils luy divertissoient le cœur et
" l'affection de la reyne sa femme, laquelle ils
" obsédoient pour l'empêcher de faire cas des
" Anglois et Angloises, la destournant d'ap-
" prendre la langue, et faisant qu'elle ne se
" portoit envers luy comme elle devoit, dont il
" avoit auparavant fait donner avis à votre
" majesté et à la reyne mère. Que maintenant,
" et depuis qu'il les a esloignés, la reyne sa femme,
" vit mieux avec lui, et qu'il a l'espérance
" qu'à l'avenir, elle luy donnera toute sorte de
" contentement. Qu'il n'est pas resolu de
" rentrer en la même peine où il a été pour le
" passé, et dont il est sorty, et que si votre
" majesté aime son repos comme son beau
" frère qu'elle ne le doit point presser à cela,
" et qu'il ne le fera point. Qu'il a donné
" à la reyne votre sœur un train digne de sa
" qualité, où il y a quelques catholics, qu'il la
" traitera en reyne, mais qu'il veut qu'elle se

" comporte avec lui comme elle doit, et qu'elle " luy défère et obeisse comme sa femme."

In addition to this account given directly to Louis the Thirteenth, a part of Bassompierre's Memoirs contains a journal of his life day by day, which embraces the whole period of his embassy to England, from the 2d of October to the 18th of December, 1626.

In this we find a remarkable instance of the familiar footing, which the Duke of Buckingham maintained with the king, and of a lesson of etiquette given to the Duke by the ambassador, of which he seems to have been too little aware to have much profited.

Bassompierre, describing this his first interview with Charles in a gallery at Hampton Court, says, " Je vis là une grande hardiesse, pour ne " pas dire effronterie, du Duc de Boukingham, " qui fut, que lorsqu'il nous vit les plus échauffés, " il partit de la main, et se vint mettre en " tiers avec le roy et moy, disant je viens faire le " holà entre vous deux. Lors, j'ostay mon chapeau, " et tant qu'il fust avec nous, je ne le voulus re- " méttre quelqu'instances que le roy et luy m'en " fissent. Puis, quand il fust retiré, je le remis " sans que le roy me le dit. Quand j'eus achevé, " et que le duc put parler à moy, il me dit, " pourquoi je ne m'etois pas voulu couvrir luy " y-étant, et que luy n'y-étant pas, je m'etois si

" francheiment couvert? Je luy répondis que je " l'avois fait pour luy faire honneur, et par ce " qu'il ne le fust pas couvert, et que je l'eusse " été, dont il me sçut bon gré, et le dit depuis " plusieurs fois, en me louant. Mais j'avois encore " une autre raison pour le faire, qui étoit, que ce " n'étoit plus audience, mais conversation par- " ticulière, puis ce qu'il l'avoit interrompue se " mettant en tiers." Buckingham, however, it seems was the mediator in this whole business. He professed to Bassompierre an aversion to all the severities of the Puritans against the Catholics, and the greatest desire to satisfy the Queen by the recall of her French household, although he had hitherto been on no very friendly terms with her, and she was supposed to dread his influence with the King. He now, however, (as Madame de Motteville tells us,) seconded an imprudent scheme, which the Queen's ill humour at the dismissal of her French servants had suggested, of making a visit to her mother, accompanied by Buckingham. To this, however, neither Mary of Medicis nor Louis the Thirteenth would consent. Buckingham was now in the height of his romantic passion for Anne of Austria, and was equally averse to war between the two countries, or, to their settling their differences without his immediate interference; he therefore announced himself to Bassompierre as the person intended

to be sent ambassador from Charles to Paris, and in his quality of lord high admiral to settle the maritime disputes between the two countries. Bassompierre was obliged to deter him by every means in his power from seeking the appointment of ambassador on this occasion; having received positive instructions from Louis the Thirteenth to prevent his coming, and even to tell him he would not be received, till every point, both with respect to the Queen's household, and to the maritime disputes, was settled. Louis, in his letter to his ambassador on the subject, says, "Je remets à votre prudence et adresse, de luy "escrire sur ce sujet, en telle sorte qu'il ne "puisse pas dire, comme il a fait en Hollande, "que je luy ai fait défendre de venir en France, "et en tout cas, s'il arrivoit que par ces considé- "rations le dit Duc de Buckingham ne fut arrêté "de faire le dit voyage, j'entens que vous luy "faisiez sçavoir par homme exprés et de créance, "que vous envoyerez vers luy, qu'il reculera les "affaires de son maître, plutôt que de les avançer "en cette sorte, et que je n'aurois point agré- "able de le voir que toutes choses ne soient "entièrement accommodées entre nous."(1) It was pique at this aversion of the court of France to receiving him, which made Buckingham in-

(1) Mémoires de Bassompierre.

sist on the command of the unfortunate expedition to La Rochelle, where he had flattered himself, he was first to have humbled the arms of France, and then, as a conqueror, to be sent to Paris to negotiate a necessary peace.

Happy had it been for Henrietta Maria and her family, if, along with her French attendants, she could have dismissed the mistaken ideas she had received from her French education; or that the misfortunes and disgrace of the latter part of her mother's life (1) had taught

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(1) Mary of Medicis, the widow of Henry the Fourth, died in exile and neglect at Blois, after having long maintained against the Cardinal de Richelieu an unequal combat for that power, which they were both equally disposed to abuse. She had been three years in England on a visit to her daughter, from the year 1638 till 1641. Her arrival and her departure is thus mentioned by a contemporary writer: —

"In anno 1638, the queen-mother of France and mother "unto the English queen, widow of Henry the Fourth, King "of France, landed in England, and came unto London the "31st of October. She was very meanly accompanied, "and had few persons of quality attending her. The King "most humanely and generously receives and entertains "her, though all men were extremely against it; for it was "observed, that wherever or unto whatever country this "miserable old queen came, there followed immediately "after her either the plague, war, famine, or one misfortune "or other. * * * * *

"In the same month of August, 1641, I beheld the "old queen-mother of France departing from London, in

her the dangers of political intrigue and political power, even in France, already long accustomed to the influence of women in the most serious affairs. (1) From the time of the dismissal of her French attendants, we find her living in perfect harmony with Charles, and from the death of the Duke of Buckingham two years afterwards, in 1628, exercising such unbounded influence over him, that his subsequent fortunes must

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" company of Thomas, Earl of Arundel; a sad spectacle " of mortality it was, and produced tears from mine eyes " and many other beholders, to see an aged, lean, de- " crepit, poor queen, ready for her grave, necessitated " to depart hence, having no place of residence in this " world left her, but where the curtesy of her hard fortune " assigned it. She had been the only stately and mag- " nificent woman of Europe, wife to the greatest king " that ever lived in France, mother unto one king and unto " two queens." — *Several Observations on the Life and Death of King Charles the First, by* WILLIAM LILLY, first published, July, 1651.

(1) Sir Edward Stafford ambassador at Paris in 1588, gives a curious account to Queen Elizabeth of the ladies who had the most political influence in the court of Henry the Fourth, in the following words : — " For Your Majesty " may assure yourself that there are four women in the " court, Mesdames de Villeroy, Retz, Princesses of Condé " and Nevers, that have all the news and most secretest " devices of the court; for there is not one of these, or at " least among these four, that hath not either a lover, an " honourer, or a private friend of the secretest council of " the court, that will almost hide nothing from them."

necessarily have much depended on her character. Unfortunately for them both, her ideas of government and religion, of the rights of princes, and of the means to be employed to maintain or retrieve them, were no less contrary to our laws, than foreign to our habits, and obnoxious to our dispositions.

This was so well understood by the nation, that Clarendon tells us from the first public demonstrations of discontent, the universal prejudice was against the queen (1); and as early as the year 1641 in the memorable petition and remonstrance which was presented to the King at Hampton Court, immediately after his return from Scotland, he is requested to let such persons only near him, in places of trust, as his parliament may confide in, and that in his princely goodness to his people, he will "reject "and refuse all mediation and solicitation to the "contrary, *how powerful and near so ever.*"

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(1) Clarendon's Life, vol. i. p. 109.

She was so aware of this herself, that in a letter to the King, of March 29. 1644, she says, "If you make a peace "and disband your army before there is an end to this "perpetual parliament, I am resolved to go to France, not "being willing to fall again into the hands of those people, "being well assured, that if the power remain with them, "that it will not be well for me in England." — *King's Cabinet opened*, p. 28.

These early expressed suspicions, her subsequent conduct was too well calculated to confirm and increase. Her ill-timed visit to France, in the year 1642, her binding her husband by a solemn promise to make no peace, nor any compromise with his discontented subjects during her absence (1), and the difficulties which it is known she afterwards threw in the way of any attempts at accommodation, were the acts of a mind as incapable of rising above the prejudices of her own country, as of estimating the force and effect of those of the country she wished to govern. It is recorded that when she returned after the Restoration to take possession of Somerset House, her former residence, she exclaimed, that if she had known the temper of the people of England some years past, as well as she did then, she had never been obliged to leave that house. (2) During the first fifteen peaceable years of Charles's reign, we must suppose that her influence was not entirely confined to her husband. Beautiful in her person, lively in her manners and conversation, brought up in a court around which the popular character of her father Henry the Fourth had thrown a

(1) Clarendon's Life, vol. i. p. 156.
(2) Wellwood's Memoir, p. 134.

fresh lustre, and belonging to a nation not backward in appreciating its own advantages, her example and the frequent intercourse with France which her establishment here must have occasioned, probably contributed to introduce many French fashions and customs into her court (1); but the influence of that court hardly extended beyond the precincts of Whitehall. The character and situation of the gentry of England in those days were too respectable and too independent to be easily influenced by power, or altered by caprice.

The wise provisions of Elizabeth had enabled our foreign commerce materially to assist the agriculture and the manufactures of the country; these, a long and uninterrupted peace of above

(1) Among others, that of suppers in society, which, Clarendon says, became universal with the court-party during the troubles. If we may believe Bassompierre, however, this court, at the beginning of the reign of Charles the First, was rather magnificent than gay. He says, in a letter to the Marechal de Schomberg, from London, in October, 1626, "Je verray ce qu'en réussira, dans "peu de jours que je passeray comme les précédens, avec "grande melancholie dans ce pays. Un homme bien reçu "s'y pourroit ennuyer, à plus forte raison moy à qui la "commission, et les autres précédentes actions de Carleton, "et de Montaigu, rendent de très-mauvais offices. Néan-"moins je trouve force courtoisie avec les seigneurs." — *Mém. de Bassompierre*, vol. ii. p. 148.

forty years (however ignobly maintained by James the First) fostered and increased.

Perhaps during the period of which we are now speaking, in spite of some habits of homely economy in the highest ranks, which would shock the wasteful refinement and splendid poverty (1) of the present day, a general ease in circumstances, and a plentiful enjoyment of the comforts of life, were more universal, and pinching want and sordid poverty less frequent, than in any former or any subsequent period of our history. (2) When the King was

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(1) It may be objected to this, that the comfortable luxuries of life are more generally diffused now than at any former period, and that the term splendid poverty is ill applied to any order of persons in the present day. I allow that all those in the possession of property of any sort spend more of it in procuring for themselves what must be called the luxuries of life than they ever did before; but does not the general prosperity of the state, and its power of making great pecuniary exertions, bear so hard (in proportion) on all orders of people, that if the only can be called opulent who have the absolute command of more than their ordinary habits of life require, much *splendid poverty* will, I think, be found among those, whose forefathers would start at the wasteful refinement of one month's expence in the mansions, both in town and country, which their descendants (with a few overgrown exceptions) find it sometimes inconvenient to maintain?

(2) The author is proud to find this opinion confirmed in the Constitutional History of England, vol. i. p. 540., where

at Nottingham with his troops, in the first of his ill-judged campaigns, he applied for money (as Clarendon tells us), to two rich misers in the country, who each, separately, denounced his neighbour, the one as having twenty thousand pounds always by him, and the other, a trunk full of coin, which both advised the King to take, although they would give nothing of their own. A hundred pounds was with difficulty obtained from another gentleman of that county, from whom the Parliament, soon after, took five thousand, which he always kept in his bed-chamber.

It was this ease, and its concomitant leisure, which allowed the thinking part of the nation to observe and to oppose the steps they saw taking to deprive them of advantages which they valued so highly, and privileges to which they were so justly attached. The terrors of the Star Chamber, of the High Commission Court, and of the Court of Wards and Liveries, with all their long train of abuses, could have fallen but on few, comparatively with the great bulk of the people, who, *procul à Jove, procul à fulmine,*

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the idea is enlarged on, and the causes of this prosperity specified, with all the accustomed acuteness of the author.

prosecuted their labours, and enjoyed the fruits of them in peace.

The acute and accurate author of the Constitutional History of England says, on occasion of the trial of the five knights, for refusing to contribute to the forced loan in 1626, "No "year, indeed, within the memory of any one "living, had witnessed such violation of public "liberty as 1627." But still these violations fell chiefly on the upper orders of society, and were so modified, before they touched the people at large, and the working classes, and were at the same time so consonant with the antecedent habits of the country, that they could scarcely have been felt.

There is an account of the house and way of living of Mr. Hastings, of Woodlands, in Hampshire, the second son of an Earl of Huntingdon, said to have been drawn up by the first Earl of Shaftesbury, and published many years ago in a periodical paper. (1) It gives the following curious picture of the sporting life and rude habits of an English country gentleman, of a date somewhat antecedent to that of which we are speaking: — "In the year 1638 lived

(1) The Connoisseur, vol. iii. No. 81.

" Mr. Hastings, by his quality son, brother, and " uncle to the Earls of Huntingdon. He was, " peradventure, an original in our age, or rather " the copy of our ancient nobility, in hunting, " not in warlike times.

" He was low, very strong and very active; " of a reddish flaxen hair. His cloaths always " green cloth, and never all worth (when new) " five pounds.

" His house was perfectly of the old fashion, " in the midst of a large park, well stocked with " deer; and near the house rabbits to serve his " kitchen; many fish ponds, great store of wood " and timber, a bowling green in it, long but " narrow, full of high ridges, it being never " levelled since it was ploughed. They used " round sand bowls, and it had a banquetting " house like a stand, built in a tree.

" He kept all manner of sport hounds, that " ran buck, fox, hair, otter, and badger; and " hawks, long and short winged. He had all " sorts of nets for fish. He had a walk in the " New Forest, and the manor of Christ Church. " This last supplied him with red deer, sea " and river fish. And indeed all his neighbours " grounds and royalties were free to him, who " bestowed all his time on these sports, but " what he borrowed to caress his neighbours

" wives and daughters; there being not a woman
" in all his walks, of the degree of a yeoman's
" wife or under, and under the age of forty,
" but it was extremely her fault if he was not
" intimately acquainted with her. This made
" him very popular, always speaking kindly to
" the husband, brother, or father; who was, to
" boot, very welcome to his house whenever he
" came. There he found beef, pudding, and
" small beer in great plenty; a house not so
" neatly kept as to shame him, or his dirty shoes;
" the great hall strow'd with marrow bones,
" full of hawks perches, hounds, spaniels, and
" terriers; the upper side of the hall hung with
" fox-skins of this and the last year's killing;
" here and there a pole-cat intermixt; game-
" keepers and hunters poles in great abundance.

" The parlour was a large room, as properly
" furnished. On a great hearth paved with
" brick lay some terriers, and the choicest
" hounds and spaniels. Seldom but two of the
" great chairs had litters of young cats in them,
" which were not to be disturbed, he having
" always three or four attending him at dinner;
" and a little white round stick of fourteen
" inches lying by his trencher, that he might
" defend such meat as he had no mind to part
" with to them. The windows (which were

" very large) served for places to lay his arrows,
" cross-bows, stone-bows, and other such like
" accoutrements. . .The corners of the room full
" of the best chose hunting and hawking poles.
" An oyster table at the lower end, which was
" of constant use twice a day all the year round.
" For he never fail'd to eat oysters before
" dinner and supper through all seasons: the
" neighbouring town of Pool supplied him
" with them.

" The upper part of the room had two small
" tables and a desk, on the one side of which
" was a church Bible, and on the other the
" Book of Martyrs. On the tables were hawks,
" hoods, bells, and such like; two or three old
" green hats, with their crowns thrust in, so as
" to hold ten or a dozen eggs, which were of a
" pheasant kind of poultry he took much care
" of, and fed himself. Tables, dice, cards, and
" boles were not wanting. In the hole of the
" desk were store of tobacco-pipes that had
" been used.

" On one side of this end of the room was
" the door of a closet, wherein stood the strong
" beer and the wine, which never came thence
" but in single glasses; that being the rule of the
" house exactly observed: for he never exceeded
" in drink, or permitted it.

" On the other side was the door into an old " chapel, not used for devotion; the pulpit, as " the safest place, was never wanting of a cold " chine of beef, venison, pasty, gammon of " bacon, or great apple-pie with thick crust, " extremely baked.

" His table cost him not much, though it was " good to eat at; his sports supplied all but " beef and mutton, except Fridays, when he had " the best salt fish (as well as other fish) he " could get, and was the day his neighbours of " best quality most visited him. He never " wanted a *London* pudding, and always sung it " in with, *My part lies therein-a.* He drank a " glass or two of wine at meals; very often " syrup of giliflower in his sack, and had always " a tun-glass without feet stood by him, holding " a pint of small beer, which he often stirred " with rosemary.

" He was well natured but soon angry, calling " his servants bastards, and cuckoldy knaves, in " one of which he often spoke truth to his own " knowledge, and sometimes in both, though of " the same man. He lived to be an hundred; " never lost his eye-sight, but always wrote and " read without spectacles, and got on horseback " without help. Until past fourscore he rode to " the death of a stag as well as any."

Of the situation, manners, and habits of the gentry of England, of what on the continent of Europe would obtain the name of untitled nobility, immediately before and during the civil wars, the admirable biographical works of Lord Clarendon, of Mrs. Hutchinson, the Diary of Mr. Evelyn, and several other contemporary writers of less celebrity, give us many details; and certainly none of the refinements of later days can prevent our looking back with pride, if not with envy, to their acquirements, to their sentiments, and to their conduct. The interesting relation given by Clarendon of his own early life, and that of his friends, of their studies, their pursuits, and their pleasures; the particulars we receive from Mrs. Hutchinson, of her education, the number of her masters, the attention paid to her accomplishments, and the share she was allowed to have in the instructions given to her brothers, can hardly be exceeded even in this educating age, when every thing that can be learned is supposed to be easily obtained by any body able to pay for the most popular instructor. On one subject only, that of religious opinions, the daily increasing prejudices of the age were essentially inimical to the enlargement of the human mind, and to the formation of characters capable of rising superior to those prejudices.

Foreign travel, which had been very general among the nobility, and the upper order of the gentry in the reigns of Elizabeth and James, was now, from an increased dread of the Roman Catholic religion, little resorted to.

The inevitable effects of this great omission, combined with our insular situation, became immediately observable in all the most distinguished characters, for sense and abilities, that arose during the ensuing struggle. Lord Clarendon himself spoke no French, nor any other modern language. (1) It is easy to suppose the disadvantages to which such a deficiency must often have subjected him, during the long course of his public services, both before and after the Restoration.

This entirely home education, this confinement to one spot, then little visited by strangers,

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(1) " It was on account of his unskilfulness in languages, " and his not understanding foreign affairs," that he refused being secretary of state at Oxford, in the year 1643. (See Life of Clarendon, vol. i. p. 141.) Later in life, and during his retreat at Montpellier, he says, " He resolved to im- " prove his understanding of the French language, *not* " towards speaking it, the defect of which he found many " conveniences in, but for the reading of any books, and to " learn Italian, towards both of which he made a competent " progress." — *Continuation of the Life of Clarendon*, vol. iii. p. 905.

was the source of more essential deficiences than a want of modern language. It allowed no opportunities of getting rid of early and inevitable prejudices, no means of acquiring that general knowledge of man in a social state, which nothing but the actual practice and experience of various manners, habits, and systems of society can supply. To the want of this intimate acquaintance with the world and with their contemporaries, which existed more among the republicans than the royalists, may be attributed much of the narrowness and violence of their religious prejudices. To the same want of knowledge of mankind must be referred the strange, mistaken attempts they made at the re-establishment of a republic, after the retirement of Richard Cromwell, and the recall of the Long Parliament. To believe for a moment that the triumphant leaders of their forces would be contented never to aspire to any command in chief, but continue to receive all their commissions from the Speaker of the House of Commons, — a House of Commons over which they themselves had just exercised their own omnipotence, — betrayed such an ignorance of human nature in general, and of civil history in particular, as proved them inadequate to the permanent government of the country,

whose wrongs they had so justly felt, and whose rights they had so nobly asserted. (1)

That the imaginary perfections of a republic should have misled the minds of those who had recently smarted under the evils of an ill-defined and ill-administered monarchical government, cannot surprise. But it would seem, that even in our own days the science of politics was still in its infancy, or else that the early-acquired prejudices of some individuals had prevented their drawing any comprehensive or practical deductions from the lessons which have been already furnished by experience. In this light, it must be confessed, appear to the author those who

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(1) The editor of Mrs. Hutchinson's life of her husband, upon this subject, observes, that it was a great oversight, the army not having from the first received commissions from the Speaker of the House of Commons, instead of receiving them from the successive generals, and adds, that this method succeeded at first in France during the Revolution, "till some of the members of the executive "power leagued themselves with some of the military com- "manders." And was it ever otherwise? Can it be otherwise? Such are the judgments formed on events only, without referring to those first principles of human nature from which they must necessarily be deducted. These principles, if once well seized and defined by the mind, will prevent mistaken judgments on effects apparently militating against them, but which, in fact, will always be found to confirm and elucidate the general principle under which they class.

can still prefer a republic to a limited monarchy, as the best mode of government, in the present advanced state of European society. It would seem that in estimating the advantages of the one, and the disadvantages of the other, all modern as well as all ancient history were forgotten, and that the last thirty years, which have, in fact, been a series of practical experiments in government, had been thrown away. Our own republican fit yielded to the first "*soldat heureux*," who had the boldness to seize the reins of power, and constitute himself a sovereign, without any legal restraint on his authority, or any check upon his will, but the habits of moderation acquired in other days. Much about the same time, the republic of Holland, after struggling for twenty-two years, in a state of fretful independence, (sullied, too, by some frightful crimes,) ended by the re-establishment of the house of Orange in a limited power. But in less than a century, the republican leaven again at work, caused that country to be the first to adopt the mad doctrines of the French revolutionists, to reject with scorn the assistance of England, and finally delivered it up, bound hand and foot, the first subsidiary kingdom in Napoleon's great system of European subjection.

The principal advantage of a monarchy, (a

constitutional, representative monarchy, always understood,) appears to be the calling into activity, and profiting by all the abilities of its subjects, without any fear of the exercise of those abilities, or of their success, making their possessors independent of, or dangerous to the state. Had the Bill of Rights, and the positive obligation to the yearly assembly of parliaments, existed in Cromwell's time, Cromwell would have been a valiant soldier, or a bold and artful statesman, in the service of his country, without even harbouring an idea of putting himself at the head of it. Had England succeeded in establishing herself as a commonwealth, who could have ensured the Duke of Marlborough, triumphant over Lewis the Fourteenth, successful in his negotiations, powerful by his popularity on the Continent, and supported by a great party at home; who, in a republic, could ensure his suffering himself to be deprived of his command, shorn of all his long-accustomed honours, and returning to the condition of any other ennobled citizen? In our own immediate times, a still stronger instance occurs, of a still greater leader, successfully opposed to a still greater enemy, and placed in still more flattering and more intoxicating circumstances of power. Long associated to the sovereigns, and commanding the

commanders of combined Europe; finishing this career of glory by a battle, where the equally-poised struggle of moral as well as physical courage was probably greater than in any of its bloody antecedents recorded in the history of the world: — who, in a republic, could have ensured this man, falling back into the ranks of common every-day life, without either disturbing the country he belonged to, or being exiled from it?

Can any one still suppose, that the perpetual popular agitations of the ancient republics, and their perpetual and necessary jealousy of all their distinguished citizens, was the best method of calling forth and employing the time and activity of the lower orders of the state, or the mind and abilities of the upper orders?

However nobly, however patriotically any citizen of a republic may begin his career, if the circumstances of the times have called his abilities into action, if those abilities have been seconded by fortune, and supported (as must always be the case in all republics) by a party, good or bad — the most virtuous republican may begin to think, that the power which he sees (or fancies he sees) abused, would, for the mere good of his country, be better placed in

his hands, than left in those of the unworthy possessors, from whom he has wrested it.

. . .

While our commonwealth's men were wholly intent on securing the independence of their etsablishments, from the possibility of a second surprise by any future Cromwell, the monarchical party were beginning to recover from some of those religious as well as political prejudices, which, before the civil war, they had shared in common with all the respectable part of the nation. Party-spirit, too, and the sort of contempt which the royalists wished to fix on the homely manners and puritanical cant of their adversaries, would alone have induced them, in their own manners and habits, and in the education of their children, to adopt every thing that could distinguish them from their political opponents. To these causes were superadded the residence on the Continent not only of the unfortunate family to whose cause they were attached, but that of many of their own relatives, connections, and intimates; of all who were either in the immediate service of the prince, or had chosen to expatriate themselves, rather than acknowledge a government, which, however administered, they truly considered as usurped. We find, therefore, during the protectorate, all the young

nobility sent to travel abroad, as a part of their education. The journals of Cromwell's parliaments are crouded with permissions for persons of distinction to go "beyond seas." And here we must admire the ease, we may almost say the noble confidence, with which these permissions were granted to persons of whose sentiments and wishes the Protector must have been well aware; aware that they left their own country to join those, yet more eager than themselves to return to it by the destruction of his authority, by the restoration of their prince to his throne, and of themselves to their political importance. (1) Religious disputes, and religious fears, had a yet greater share than political grievances in the dis-

(1) Not less to be noticed is the manner in which all the nobility, even those who had taken the most active part before the settlement under Cromwell, were left by him unmolested in the enjoyment of their property and estates, so long as they abstained from open attempts against his authority. This was at least equal to the mercy and forbearance shown at the Restoration by the opposite party. The well-known story of Cromwell telling some one who, upon his return to England, denied having seen Charles Stuart while abroad, that it was true the person in question had been *blindfolded* during the interview, is only a confirmation of the fact that the vigilance of his government obviated the necessity of its cruelty. Compare this with the Revolution in France, during its whole progress from the reign of Louis the Sixteenth to that of Buonaparte.

turbances of the times, and are always the most powerful motive of action in popular insurrections. The parliamentary leaders, therefore, became almost all, during their long struggle, either zealots or hypocrites; their manners assumed a ferocity, their minds contracted an intolerance, and their language a jargon unknown, except among a few fanatics and polemical divines before the civil wars. During the temporary quiet under Cromwell, every one, even of those whose manners and tastes had been formed in better times, and whose minds were above the vulgar prejudices of the day, were yet obliged to conform to their dictates. All the troublesome observances prescribed, and all the restraints exacted by their clergy, were complied with, and all the nonsense they uttered was swallowed, for fear of the suspicion of a secret attachment to Popes, Kings, or Bishops. (1)

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(1) We shall hardly wonder at any subsequent dereliction of common sense in obedience to their injunctions, when we advert to the language of the pulpit in the years 1642 and 1643, when, in the metropolis of the country, and before the House of Commons, they announced, that "*the "fresh remembrance of sin is like a pea in an issue, that "keeps it open, and makes it run.*" (Sperstow's Fast Sermon before the House of Commons, 21st July, 1643.) "*That*

In vain the elegant and accomplished mind of Mrs. Hutchinson, laments the puerile quarrels of the sectaries among themselves, the wretched company they were obliged to keep, and the little vexations and tyrannies to which they were obliged to submit; she complains of all this, as proceeding from the misgovernment of Oliver, whom all the honest republicans abhorred, and sees not, or sees not sufficiently clearly, that they were the evils which the political state of the country, joined to its peculiar character and insular situation, inevitably occasioned. Nothing, indeed, could be so intolerable

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" *satan, prelates, papists, malignants, shall be under-workmen,* " *and kitchen servants to him who hath his fire in Sion, and* " *his furnace at Jerusalem, to purify and refine the vessels of* " *mercy for the Lord's house.*" (Rutherford's Sermon before the House of Commons, 31st January, 1643.) That, " *when-* " *ever the children are come to the birth, and there is no* " *strength to bring them forth, all the world cannot furnish* " *you with such another midwife as prayer.*" (Edward Reynolds's Fast Sermon before the House of Commons, 27th July, 1643.) And asked, if " *we shall, like tame fools,* " *suffer every body to wipe our noses of God.*" (Ambrose Perne's Fast Sermon before the House of Commons, 31st May, 1643.) It is difficult to conceive, that such degrading nonsense could have been contemporary with the dignified and sonorous periods of Clarendon, the pure English diction of Hooker, and the keen logical deductions of Barrow.

to any cultivated mind, and where such minds existed, so impossible to last, as the state of manners and society then in England. The nation, proud of its victorious struggle for civil liberty and independence, and anxious to enjoy the fruits of it, found itself tyrannised over and dictated to, in all the details of social life, by a fanatical clergy. The extraordinary circumstances of the times, and the nearly balanced parties of Puritans and Presbyterians, had lifted both into an authority little less arbitrary, and much more individually oppressive, than that of the Roman Catholic religion. To check the supposed advances of that religion, under the cover of episcopacy, had been the single point of union between two sects, both equally hating each other, and both equally intolerant. The proscription of every thing that would bear the name of amusement, in which the Presbyterians exceeded even the Puritans, left the people no place of public resort but the church.

Here their preachers laboured continually to perpetuate the influence of those violent prejudices, on which alone their own authority was founded. They excluded from the minds of their auditory every liberal idea, every enlightened and elegant pursuit, and endeavoured to confine their views of human nature, and the

affairs of men, within the narrow circle described by the particular creed of their own sect.

Under these circumstances, the Restoration was welcome to the hearts of the people, from the moment Cromwell died, in spite of all the political objections to it, and all the integrity and abilities which supported these objections. (1)

The dull time-serving mind of Monk, would, otherwise, never have accomplished the recal of monarchy (2); nor would the sound understandings of those days, have allowed it to take place without endeavouring at some restrictions, on the future conduct of the returning monarch.

The proposal for a committee to consider of such restrictions, when brought forward by Sir Matthew Hale in the Convention Par-

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(1) Neither the causes nor the effects of the Restoration are here considered in a political light, but merely as they affected the social habits and manners of the nation.

(2) The author of the Constitutional History of England thus expresses himself: — "But it can hardly be said that "the King's Restoration was rather owing to him (Monk), "than to the general sentiments of the nation; and almost "the necessity of circumstances, which had already made "every judicious person anticipate the sole termination of "our civil discord which they had prepared." — *Hallam*, vol. ii. p. 142.

liament, was over ruled, without any farther debate. A mere declaration of Monk's, that he would not answer for the quiet, either of the army or the nation, if the recal of the King was delayed, proved sufficient to hush all fears, but those designedly excited. The author of the Constitutional History indeed says, that any restrictions, previous to the King's being restored to a legal existence, were impossible, and blames the Convention Parliament, rather than the antecedent proceedings. Such, we know, was the universal joy expressed at the return of Charles, that he exclaimed, that it must have been his own fault, not coming sooner, since every body seemed so glad to see him. (1)

An idea has been started lately by some persons, of no mean authority, that the Restoration materially injured the literature of England.

It is certainly much easier to prove that it materially injured its morals. Those who had connected in their minds all the disgraceful profligacy of the court of James the First, and all the arbitrary measures of his son, with Popery and Episcopacy; those who abhorred the one, and aimed at abolishing the other, necessarily

(1) See Clarendon, vol. v. p. 6.

professed a purity of morals, a sanctity of manners, and a severity of life, neither affected by their opponents themselves, nor exacted by them from their followers.

During the excitation of the civil wars, and the powerful effects of that moral atmosphere, common to all great bodies of men, met together for one purpose, and intent on one object, the sanctified became severe, the severe zealots, the zealots enthusiasts. An army thus composed was invincible to its enemies, and certainly much less obnoxious to its friends than such bodies usually are. The ill conceived and destructive piety, which led them to deface and mutilate many of the beautiful public buildings that adorned their country, must ever be regretted. While we own they were in general guiltless of that licence, and those outrages on the persons and property of their fellow citizens, which are the usual concomitants, and one of the most afflicting scourges of war (1); the newspapers of

(1) Their serious and regular deportment must have made the greater and more favourable impression on the public mind, because one of the last armaments the country had witnessed, about fifteen years before, was that sent out on the unfortunate expedition to the isle of Rhé, under the Duke of Buckingham, in 1627. These troops returning to London, discontented, ill paid, and idle, are reported, by

the day, then first resorted to as a vehicle for the expression of party feelings, and like all succeeding party writings, often exaggerating the truth;—even these newspapers, on both sides, show how little violence was used on either, except at the actual moment of contention, or when the spirits of men had been soured and roused by some long and obstinately disputed siege.

Lady Fairfax, who was taken prisoner on the retreat of her husband from Bradford to Leeds, in 1643, with the officer of dragoons behind whom she rode, was a very few days after sent back to Leeds, in the coach of the Earl of Newcastle, the commander of the King's troops. (1)

Instances might even be given, when in the heat of contest, those who had neither abilities nor disposition to take any active part in it, were left by their neighbours in the undisturbed possession of "the humble blessings of the life they loved." In a journal kept by a Yorkshire squire, an ancestor of the family of Daroney, who lived in the immediate neighbourhood of

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all their contemporaries, to have filled the metropolis with riots and disorder.

(1) See "*Short's Memorial of Thomas, Lord Fairfax,*" published in "*Select Tracts relative to the Civil Wars in England, by* BARON MASERES," vol. ii. p. 428.

Marston-Moor, during the period of the civil war, we find a memorandum of his going out hunting on the very day of that memorable engagement, which mentions every particular of the chase, without a single allusion either to the battle or to the state of the country about him, excepting as it related to his sport.

The women remained universally unmolested, and attached to their domestic duties. They appeared in their only appropriate sphere of action, as the friends, helpmates, and companions of the families to whom they belonged. No woman started out of her sphere into unseemly notice. No heroine excited a momentary enthusiasm at the expence of the more difficult virtues of her sex. The distinguished abilities of Mrs. Hutchinson were not unveiled to the public eye, till above a century after she died, and we may fairly suppose that many other females, whose natural endowments were not inferior, and who acted not less honourable parts, remain unknown to us.

It is worthy of observation, and strongly corroborative of the entire alienation of the two countries, which had taken place previous to the Restoration of Charles the Second, that during his subsequent reign, while France attained a degree of eminence in literature,

which she has never since surpassed, while her dramatists excelled in the purity of their language, and the good taste of their compositions, the poets of England (with one splendid exception) should have been so remarkably deficient in both these qualities. That the social life of France seems to have united in no common degree the gallantry of a former age, with the gaiety and freedom of later days, while our own country, relieved from the puritanical cant imposed by the sectaries, and already possessing the immortal works which had honoured the reigns of Elizabeth and James, should have fallen so much below her neighbours in every thing amenable to the laws of taste. That her wit should have continued so coarse, her pleasures have become so vulgarly licentious, and her restored theatre never have risen to a level with its former self. The truth is, that in France, the age of Louis the Fourteenth, as it has since been denominated, with all its increased luxuries and licence, had been immediately preceded by the romance, the enthusiasm, and the high tone of the age of chivalry, which had scarcely ended with Louis the Thirteenth.

During the intermediate period, France had been under the control of two despotic ministers, who had so established the power of the crown,

and increased the influence of the court, that it became not only a centre from which the national taste emanated, but a standard to which all the nation endeavoured to conform.

Thus their manners, their amusements, their gallantries, all partook of a strain of elevation, of romance, and of dignified restraint, which was more that of the preceding age than of their own. In England the case was far otherwise. In England the end of the age of chivalry was disgraced by the contemptible character of James the First. The base profligacy of the sovereign, and his court, had degraded the character of princes, their favorites, and their adherents, and left behind such a legacy of disgust, as prevented the really elegant taste and pure manners of his son from acquiring that influence on the taste and manners of the country, which they would otherwise have obtained. This disgust rapidly increasing by the ill advised measures of Charles, both in church and state, soon settled into an abhorrence of every thing connected with a court, and, consequently, of that amenity and refinement of manners which ought to adorn and ennoble it.

The circumstances which, for the twenty years preceding the Restoration, had served totally to alienate England from France, were at

the same time laying the foundation of an unusually close connection between them. The Restoration sent home numbers, of whom some had been educated, and others had spent the youngest and gayest years of their life in France. They had necessarily adopted much of her manners, habits, and amusements. Those they found established in their own country, were certainly not likely to have superseded them, even if the enthusiasm of the moment had not been thrown into the scale in their favour. But such was the spring which the public mind had received, from the removal of the forced and unnatural pressure of the sectaries upon every unaffected feeling and innocent amusement, that the nation started at once from primness into profligacy, and from sobriety to excess. The serious manners and moral habits of England were derided at the court as fanatical, and stigmatised in the country as disloyal. A religion which required no other test from its followers than loving plum-porridge, and hating long prayers, and a loyalty which was to be distinguished by drinking, bonfires, and holiday-making, were certain of becoming immediately popular.

From the Prince whose return they thus hailed, much might certainly have been expected, even without the enthusiasm in his

favour, unavoidably excited by the circumstances of the times. He had enjoyed the advantage of such an education as, perhaps, had never before fallen to the lot of any one born to a throne, and ascending that throne when the powers of his mind and body were in their fullest vigour. At the age of fourteen, he had been sent out of the reach of the triumphant forces of the Parliament, under the care and direction of the illustrious Clarendon. The next sixteen years of his life, were spent in various residences on the continent, at a time when the transactions of the countries which he inhabited were peculiarly interesting and instructive. He had the advantage of a personal acquaintance with many of the princes, and most of the statesmen then acting a distinguished part in Europe. Instead of having passed his youth in the uninstructive or debasing intercourse with mankind, too common among princes, instead of being surrounded by flatterers fore-stalling his wishes, and acquiescing in his opinions, he had been early called upon to make personal exertions, and to submit to personal privations, inconveniences, and mortifications. He had been obliged to solicit favour, instead of receiving flattery, and often to put up with slights and neglect from the ruling characters in all the states that witnessed his

long, destitute, and almost hopless exile. The little court which followed his desperate fortunes was full of the disputes, factions, and opposition, natural to men in circumstances, where every one was willing to lay upon his neighbour the blame of misfortunes which they all felt it difficult to bear. He had opportunities, seldom offered to princes, to prove the character of his friends, and to discover and study those of his enemies. In Scotland he had been obliged to submit to the most humiliating and offensive conditions imposed on his government, and to the most arbitrary and vexatious tyranny exercised upon himself. In England he had been exposed to almost every want, and every danger which human nature can experience, and he owed, not only his liberty, but his life, to the fidelity and honour of some of the meanest of his subjects.

In France he had to deal with hollow professions of friendship, and powerful, though secret enmity, from Cardinal Mazarin. He had been an eye witness of all the petulant follies of the Fronde, and all the childish animosity of its abettors, against the person of an artful minister. Contemptible squabbles for undue authority, so destitute of rational end or aim, that to the sober eye of history, they more resemble the riots of schoolboys, than the steady resolves of men, to

pursue some distinct object of public utility, by serious means. With these advantages, Charles was recalled to a throne, which the vigorous measures of a successful usurper had restored to him with a lustre and a respectability in the eyes of surrounding nations which it had seldom before attained. He returned to a country, ennobled by its exertions, and enlightened by its experience, and found himself in a situation, in which he might have profited by all the abilities that had been exerted, not only for but against the cause of his family; by the keen piercing mind, great talents, and powerful eloquence of Anthony Ashley Cooper, ripened in twenty turbulent years of active employment; and by the acknowledged integrity, tried affection, and patriotic loyalty of the virtuous Southampton, who, in proud unsubmitting retirement, had rejected every advance from Cromwell.

He brought back with him the capacious intellect of Hyde, the tutelary genius of his exile; who seeing, or thinking he saw, in a monarchical government, and the strict and equal administration of justice, his idea of the perfection of social order, would have continued to uphold, and support all, and more than all, the power we have since found can be safely invested in

any crown. (1) But all these advantages seem, like the good seed in the parable, which fell upon

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(1) The opinion contained in this sentence as to the bent of Lord Clarendon's politics, the author hopes will satisfy a lively and accomplished friend, who has lately submitted the character of Clarendon to the severe scrutiny of his accurate and discriminating mind.

That the chancellor may, in some instances, have been involved in the rapacious measures of the day, his censurer has succeeded in proving. The only palliation which such measures can admit of, was the pecuniary uncertainties and difficulties in which every body had passed the twenty preceding years, during which all delicacy on the subject of money, or presents offered or received, seems to have been shaken even in honourable minds.

The persecuting spirit of the chancellor in religious opinions, which his critic next dwells on so severely, may fairly admit of the same palliation — the persecuting fashion and spirit of the times. In this spirit every sect of Christians had (to their disgrace) participated and rivalled each other. That the distinguished abilities and many virtues of Clarendon, did not enable him to soar above all the vices and all the prejudices of his age, must be a matter of regret; for lowering an historical character no longer able to redeem its frailties, is taking away from the joint stock company of human nature a portion of those abilities, of that virtue, and of the fair fame attending on the exercise of both, which constitutes the value, and which elevates the tone of national character.

The same indulgence cannot be allowed to prevent the detection of the many inaccuracies and inconsistencies of Clarendon's great historical work and memoirs. The author of the Constitutional History of England, treating of the

the sand, as quickly to have disappeared, and to have been as completely thrown away. A disposition naturally careless, a temper naturally cheerful, lively spirits, and feelings on which nothing was capable of making a deep impression, had empowered Charles so to support his adverse fortune, as to excite an opinion of his mind and understanding which belonged neither to his character or his habits. (1) The variety of

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same period, is bound to seek, by cross-examination of every contemporary witness, all lapses from truth, and all contradictions existing in a work, which both from the author, the part which he acted, and the times of which he treats, comes with such a weight of authority before the public.

(1) This carelessness of disposition was probably much increased by his mother's conduct to him at a time of life when, if a proper use had been made of the extraordinary circumstances in which he was placed, the natural faults of his character might have been corrected instead of confirmed. After he left the island of Jersey, at the age of sixteen, the policy of Cardinal Mazarin persuaded Henrietta Maria that it was necessary for her husband's affairs that the person of the Prince of Wales should be in France. No sooner was he arrived there, than the same policy dictated a total neglect of him, leaving him entirely dependant upon his mother, to make the English parliament believe that he was at Paris against the will of Mazarin. During the prince's residence there, from 1655 to 1657, his mother supplied him with clothes and other necessaries, and he never had the command of five guineas in his pocket. She thought proper, too, not to allow him to be initiated into

scenes and of society, to which his exile had introduced him, had formed his manners, without correcting his character, and the necessity and the shifts to which he had been reduced, had sharpened his wits, without enlarging his intellect. The same carelessness which had enabled him to support his misfortunes with cheerfulness, now allowed him to bear his prosperity with moderation. His much-extolled lenity to his enemies at his restoration, was, in fact, as entirely a consequence of his character, and as little an effort of his mind, as his former admired resignation. This lenity (from whatever cause), and the easy, gracious manners which accompanied it, must naturally have increased his general popularity during the first years after his return. It seems to have had the still further effect of leading many contemporaries, and some subsequent writers, into an erroneous estimation of the clemency which they have ascribed to him and to his govern-

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any sort of business, or even to make him sensible of the unhappy situation of the royal family, and of his country. To this mistaken conduct, and the expedients to which his total dependance with regard to money must have reduced him, may fairly be attributed much of his subsequent want of delicacy in the means of procuring it, and his carelessness and prodigality in its disbursement.

ment. It is an attribute they will be found so little to deserve, that during his reign more persons perished on the scaffold for state offences, than in all the succeeding century, from the revolution to the present day. (1)

Much of this intemperate effusion of blood may be attributed to the influence of the Duke of York; but this was only another and a more baneful effect of the culpable carelessness which we have already noticed.

James, with a very inferior understanding, a worse temper, and a narrower mind, had a much stronger impulse given to his character, by the doctrines and practice of his religion; a religion, whose every fault, of the many laid to its charge, may be resolved into the *single* one (and its bitterest enemies need not seek for another), that of being too powerful a lever to be placed in the hands of so imperfect a being as man.

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(1) Ninety-eight persons were executed for state offences from the year 1660 to 1685.

COMPARATIVE VIEW.

CHAPTER I.

CONDUCT OF THE ROYAL FAMILY AT THE RESTORATION. — DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM. — INFERIORITY OF THE TASTE, MANNERS, LITERATURE, AND SOCIAL HABITS OF ENGLAND, TO THOSE OF FRANCE AT THIS PERIOD. — REASONS FOR IT. — EFFECTS OF THE BAD TASTE OF THE TIMES ON MORALS AND ON SOCIETY. — LORD ROCHESTER. — EXCESSIVE DRINKING. — KING'S BAD EXAMPLE. MEMOIRES DE GRAMMONT, ATALANTIS, DUCHESS OF CLEVELAND.

UPON the restoration of the monarchy in 1660, and the re-establishment of the royal family in England, the splendour of a numerous court would probably have been adopted in preference to the economical simplicity of a republic, even if the princes who constituted that court had not imported all their ideas of its scale, regulations, and amusements, from that of France.

Clarendon, whose sober judgment anticipated this tendency, complains of Henrietta Maria

having already acted upon these ideas, even during their exile, in the formation of the household of her son, the Duke of York, at a time when he had nothing to bestow upon his servants but empty nominations to unpaid offices. Necessity, indeed, had then often obliged both Charles and his brother to put off clamorous importunity with promises, as improperly extorted as they were afterwards ill performed.

On their return to England, the appointments in their households were rewards eagerly sought after, and often necessary to the support of those whose losses in the cause of royalty were thus inadequately, and thus only remunerated. The more wealthy nobility and great landholders of the country either returned with the king to take possession of their restored estates, or came forward to greet his arrival, and add lustre to his court, from the dignified retirement in which they had lived during his absence.

The Duke of Buckingham, the playfellow of his earliest years, and the associate of many of his subsequent dangers, joined his triumphal entry to Whitehall (1), released from the durance

(1) He rode bare-headed with Monk before the King on his entry into London. May, 1660.

in which a premature return to England had for some time placed him.

This distinguished person seems to have united every gift of nature and of fortune most coveted by men. Adopted by Charles the First from the moment of his father's untimely death, when he was little more than a year old, he was brought up entirely with the King's children, and, consequently, may be said to have been exposed to all the disadvantages generally attached to the birth of princes, without having a right to plead that very sufficient and sweeping apology for his errors and follies. Like them, too, called into active life, and to the government of his own affairs, as early as they are often called to the government of those of others, we find his character uniting all the faults inseparable from such a station. His great parts were unripened by application, and dangerous from self-sufficiency, his talents frittered away in useless or unprosecuted pursuits, his weight and importance in the country lost in the unsteadiness of his conduct, and the qualities of his heart smothered and rendered useless by the volatility of his disposition, mistaking profligacy for pleasure, and prodigality for magnificence. Duped through his vanity by Louis the Fourteenth on his embassies abroad, and

made a tool by his worthless associates in administration at home; the persecutor of Lord Clarendon, whose great character he was well able to appreciate; the satyrist of Dryden, whose genius his own talents and love of letters should have led him to admire and protect. It has been justly said, that there is often as much good fortune in the distribution of posthumous fame, as in the acquirement of that bestowed by contemporaries. The Duke of Buckingham was certainly not lucky in either respect; his culpable neglect of the decencies of life, and of public opinion, was amply visited upon him in unmeasured abuse during his life; and it is remarkable, that the same person should have inspired the most brilliant passages of descriptive satire extant in the language of their country, to two of its most celebrated poets. To Dryden's masterly character of the living Zimri, Pope has added his death, drawn with equal beauty, although with less individual truth. The "worst inn's worst room" was the comfortable house of an agent, and in his last moments, if unsurrounded by the parade and show of his former life, he seems to have been equally exempt from the turbulence and agitation with which it had been accompanied.

He had given early proofs of distinguished cou-

rage and presence of mind in the civil wars, both of his own country and those of France. He had twice refused to compound with the parliament for his great estates, and to abandon the cause of royalty. At last, wearied out by the length of an inactive exile, ill suited to his volatile character, he returned to England in the year 1657, although under the ban of Cromwell, and, consequently, exposed to the forfeiture of his life. A considerable part of his large possessions were immediately restored to him by Lord Fairfax, a generous enemy, who seems to have accepted of their forfeiture with a view of returning them to the real owner. He accompanied the gift with that of his daughter's hand, and a still further increase of property. (1)

However little conducive this marriage was to the permanent domestic happiness of the parties, from the dissimilarity of their sentiments, and

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(1) He was married at Nunappleton, in Yorkshire, Sept. 1657. Anecdotes of the day tell us, that "when the Lord "Fairfax disliked the match with his daughter, not having "seen the Duke, his lady said, 'Ah! but the Duke has "'much of God in his face;' and so after Lord Fairfax "said so too." — *Notes copied from the Pocket-book of Mr.* RICHARD SYMONDS, *an Officer in Charles the First's Army.*

from the Duke's subsequent licentiousness (1), yet it is stated, and probably with much truth, that the happiest period of his life was that which he spent in the country, at the house of his father-in-law, Lord Fairfax, before the restoration. His cultivated mind and the variety of scenes and of society which he had early witnessed, made his conversation and manners singularly lively and agreeable. His leisure was here passed respectably, and under those wholesome restrictions which his subsequent misuse of great wealth and power proved how much he required. At the restoration he came into the uncontrolled possession of above 25,000*l.* a year, an income at that time one of the very largest possessed by any English subject. The great advantages it afforded in procuring indulgences and luxuries, then of less easy access, and less

(1) "The Duchess of Buckingham is likely to be blind; "a favour of her Lord's, which she has been ever very "thankful for; but lately some friend in kindness endea- "voured to inform her judgment and reform her behaviour, "reasoned it with her, and represented her obligation to "such a husband; upon which the little wise woman showed "some resentments to her Lord, but he soon made her "confess who this friend was, and a grievous bustle there "has been, but the poor creature is almost eaten up with "her case." — *Lady Russell's Letters to her Lord*, 2d edit. p. 54.

generally diffused than at present, certainly placed its possessor in a comparatively higher situation than that of any of our great landholders in later times. At first his expences seem to have been dignified and princely; his spacious residence in the Strand (1), established on the most magnificent footing, was constantly open to all foreigners of distinction, and all the French nobility, whose visits to England were now frequent. The two courts of London and Paris, for political reasons, encouraged this intercourse, and made their near family connection, as well as their amusement, often a cloak for other transactions, which, under any less plausible pretences, would have been immediately obnoxious to the English public.

The King, and, indeed, all the royal family, soon after their return, accepted entertainments from many of the principal nobility. (2) The

(1) He inhabited York-house, formerly the town residence of the Archbishops of York. His extravagant expenditure obliged him to sell it to builders, who erected on its site the streets still called by his name and titles. He next inhabited Wallingford house, on the site of the present Admiralty. This he likewise sold in 1680, and purchased with Lord Shaftesbury a house in Dowgate, in the city, with some view of securing popularity among the citizens.

(2) The first Lady Burlington, in a MS. journal in the

Duke of Buckingham's house was frequently thus honoured. His character in so many points resembled that of his still more unprincipled sovereign, that, although he was often in temporary disgrace, although the *monarch* was obliged to punish the factious subject, or incompetent minister, the *man* was always willing to recall the easy, profligate, amusing companion. The treasonable designs for which he was obliged to abscond in 1666, resolve themselves into some silly association with a reputed conjuror (1) for exploring secrets in alchemy and judicial astrology, which it was at least as disgraceful in his enemies to convert into a serious accusation as it was in him to have

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possession of her descendant, the Duke of Devonshire, mentions the King and the Queen Dowager supping with her one night, and the Duke and Duchess of York another, in a part of London not likely to be again inhabited by those honoured with royal visits, White Friars.

(1) Dr. Heydon, whom he employed to cast the King's nativity, which was forbidden by law. In this sort of nonsense the Duke had acquired a belief in France, and the King was certainly not exempt from it, as we see by letters from his mother and from Lord Jermyn in 1656, marking their anxiety that he should see a person who had been so successful in predictions, that they proposed sending the man in question to the King, at the Hague, where he then was. — See THURLOW's *State Papers*, vol. ii.

given them the opportunity. (1) From the heavier charge of betraying the King's councils in 1673, he defended himself before the House of Commons in a speech, marked with all the lively frankness that belonged to his character. (2) Indeed, his eloquence, whenever it was employed on the popular side, which in his versatile politics was frequently the case, does honour to his opinions, while his manner of expressing them forms a striking contrast to the long-winded, involved disquisitions since delivered in the same assembly by many hardly more steady politicians. (3)

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(1) It is remarkable that on occasion of his arrest and commitment to the Tower, he was guilty of the same folly that we have seen repeated in our own days, of mistaking form for principle, and wantonly disturbing the peace and endangering the lives of his fellow citizens, in opposing, by force and barricades, what he considered as an illegal arrest by the executive power.

(2) It was upon this occasion that he said, " If I am a " grievance, I am the cheapest grievance this house ever " had."

(3) Lord Clarendon mentions his eagerness upon some occasions in parliament: — " When the Irish Cattle Bill " was brought into the House of Peers, in 1667, the Duke " of Buckingham, who was seldom up before eleven o'clock, " came to the house the first in the morning, and staid till " the last at night; for the debate often held from the " morning *till four o'clock, and sometimes candles were* " *brought in.*" — *Clarendon's Life*, vol. ii. p. 112.

His strange protection of that still stranger character, Colonel Blood, ended, like most connections into which the careless allow themselves to be drawn by the designing and profligate, in attaching a part of the disgrace and obloquy due to the misdeeds of the one, on the folly of the other. The Duke of Buckingham's colloquial wit, the quickness of his repartees, "his "soul of whim," have been often celebrated. His conference when recovering from an illness with a Roman Catholic priest, sent to him by the Duke of York, in hopes of making him a convert to his religion, evidently gave Swift the first idea of the reasoning of Lord Peter with his brothers Martin and Jack in the Tale of the Tub. Before the priest opens the subject, the Duke, taking up the cork of the bottle of wine on the table, says, "But all this while, father, "you take no notice of my fine gelding here. "Do but observe his exquisite shape; what a "fine turned neck is there! His eyes how "lively and full! His pace how majestic and "noble! I'll lay a hundred guineas there is "nothing in Newmarket can compare with "him."

Priest. "An't please your grace, I see no "horse."

Duke. "Why, don't you see me play with his

" mane, stroke him under the belly, pat his
" back, and manage him as I please?"

Priest. " Either your grace is merrily dis-
" posed, or else your illness has a very unlucky
" effect on your grace's imagination. Upon
" my sincerity, I see nothing but a cork in your
" hand."

Duke. " How, my horse dwindled into a
" foolish piece of cork! Come, father, this is
" very unkindly done of you, to turn the finest
" gelding in Europe, whose sire was a true
" Arab, and had a better genealogy to show
" than the best gentleman in Wales or Scotland
" can pretend to —— It surprises me, puts me
" to confusion, I can't tell what to say or do.
" Therefore, at my request, once more observe
" him more carefully, and tell me your
" opinion."

Priest. " Not to flatter, then, this melancholy
" humour in your grace, which may but serve
" to confirm and rivet it, I must roundly and
" fairly tell your grace that it is a cork, and
" nothing but a cork."

Duke. " 'Tis hard that a person of my
" quality's word won't be taken in such a
" matter, where I have not the least prospect
" of getting a farthing by imposing on you.
" — But, father, how do you make good your

" assertion? I say still 'tis a horse, you tell me " 'tis a cork; how shall this difference be made " up between us?"

Priest. " Very easily. For instance, I first " examine it (taking the cork from the Duke) " by the smell, and that tells me it is cork. " I next consult my sight, and that affirms the " same. Then I judge it by my taste, and still " 'tis cork, and my ears that have heard the " description of this bark a hundred times " concur in the same story. It is impossible " that all my senses should be bantered and " cheated in an affair of this nature, and they " are the proper judges to appeal to upon such " occasions."

Duke. " Nay, since you are so positive, I " won't contest the matter with you, but e'en " let it be a cork. The fumes arising from my " illness, I perceive, had somewhat disordered " me. But now they are blown over, and I see " as plain as a pike-staff that 'tis nothing but a " cork. So now, father, if you please, to the " business in hand."

The priest then brings forward the usual arguments from the literal acceptation of the words on which the doctrine of transubstantiation is founded; the Duke recurs to his cork. " I see, " father, I must refresh your memory with this

" piece of cork, which I positively affirm once " more to be a horse. Just now you would be " governed by the senses in those matters that " properly belong to their tribunal; but now you " disown the jurisdiction of the court, which is " not honestly done."

Priest. " But in matters of faith."

Duke. " And what of all that? No man " shall persuade me to believe against the plain " conviction of my senses. Here is a conse- " crated wafer; you tell me 'tis God Almighty; " I say, 'tis a piece of bread, and nothing else: if " I examine it by my taste, 'tis bread; if by my " smell, sight, and touch, 'tis bread still." (1)

The Duke thus covered the attempt on his protestant faith (such as it was) with a ridicule which the vindictive and bigoted James seems never to have forgiven. On the death of Charles, the Duke of Buckingham, no longer counting upon that indulgence and favour at court to which he had hitherto been accustomed, and having exhausted his princely fortune by every species of thoughtless extravagance and idle profusion, retired to his estates in Yorkshire.

(1) See conference between the Duke of Buckingham and Father Fitzgerald, an Irish priest, George Duke of Buckingham's Works, vol. ii. p. 153.

Here he passed the remainder of his life, which terminated in the same year with that of the short and infatuated reign of James. Here, at his manor of Helmsley, he excelled as a foxhunting country gentleman in the entertainment of his neighbours, as much as he had formerly excelled as a courtier at London and Paris. Here, too, he still continued to amuse himself with writing; but his want of all early application prevented that improvement in his compositions which might have been expected from the maturity of his talents. His Rehearsal, the only one of his three theatrical pieces which has survived him, new in the idea, and lively in the execution, certainly gives a high opinion of the quickness of his invention; and the happy parodies it contains of passages in other pieces, all indeed sufficiently open to ridicule, inspire no mean opinion of his natural taste. But with good taste, the fashion of the day was so much at variance, that we find not only the works of the Duke of Buckingham, and his idle companions, but even those of the great poet he undertook to satirise, often disgraced by coarse profligacy, both of thought and of expression, deformed by slovenly carelessness, and divested of half their interest by a strange absence of all arrange-

ment, which their authors conceived to be only the privilege of genius.

As the effects of a good or bad taste are as distinguishable in the moral affections and the habits of social life, as in literature or the fine arts, so the same coarse profligacy which too often dictated the verses of the "wits of Charles's days," pervaded their pleasures, disgraced their talents, and curtailed their enjoyments.

Lord Rochester, we may be sure, was not the only victim who sunk under the effects of extravagant intemperance, although his companions in vice had not previously risen to his distinction in its practice.

Indeed, Lord Rochester seems to have inherited the largest share of ill fame, for the shortest run of the indulgences which procured it, of any rake upon record. The Restoration found him at Oxford, from whence he was very early sent to travel in France and Italy, for he appeared at his return, when only eighteen, at the court of Charles, distinguished for his figure, talents, and familiarity with modern languages. To the reputation which he brought with him, he immediately added that of brilliant courage, by his conduct as a volunteer on board the fleet, in the campaigns of 1665 and 1666,

against the Dutch. Hitherto his character was unsullied, his behaviour, both at college and abroad, had been irreproachable. The fashion of the day and a desire of notoriety seem alone to have plunged him into that course of wild debauchery which brought him to his grave at the early age of thirty-two, after enduring all the bodily sufferings of a premature decay, and all the severe regret and anguish of a lively intelligent mind, for time mispent, talents abused, and reputation thrown away.

Habitual excess in drinking, that degrading infirmity of the north, to which loyalty had given a new pretence, was general upon all occasions of social meeting among men, whether for business or pleasure.

The disorder and mischief attendant on inebriety seem to have increased with the increasing violence of political dissension: from this time to the Revolution they pervaded all orders of society. No dignity of situation, no responsibility of character were exempted from them. Sir John Reresby tells us, that in 1686, at a dinner at Alderman Duncombe's, "the "Lord Chancellor Jefferies, the Lord Treasurer, "(Hyde Earl of Rochester), and others, drank "themselves into that height of frenzy, that "among friends it was whispered they had

" stripped into their shirts, and that had not an " accident prevented them, they had got upon " a sign-post to drink the King's health."

Mr. Evelyn gives us an account of a wedding at which he was present in 1683, " of one Mrs. " Castle to her fifth husband, a Lieutenant- " colonel of the citty." (Train-bands probably.) " There was at the wedding the Lord Mayor, " the Sheriff, several Aldermen and persons " of quality, above all, Sir George Jefferies, " newly made Lord Chief Justice of England, " who, with Mr. Justice Withings, daunced " with the bride, and were exceedingly merry. " These great men spent the rest of the after- " noon till eleven at night in drinking healths, " taking tobacco, and talking much beneath " the gravity of judges, who had but a day or " two before condemned Mr. Algernon Sidney." A more striking picture can hardly be given of the unseemly manners of the times. The tavern, as well as the houses of individuals, were the scenes of these convivial meetings. If women formed any part of the society, it was those of the lowest and most degraded order.

From these orgies they sometimes resorted to the theatre, a mirror which reflected too truly their own manners and morals, to be at all likely

to improve them. Sometimes they issued forth into the streets, to the annoyance of the sober part of society. The total want of all police in the metropolis, and the lax administration of criminal justice, are evident not only from the feats of Colonel Blood and his associates, but from many other disgraceful adventures of the times. The attack on Sir John Coventry was dictated by a spirit of vindictive revenge in the highest quarter. It is so unlike the naturally easy, careless character of the King, that one would almost suppose his anger to have been prompted by others, or exasperated by circumstances with which we are unacquainted. (1) An indecorous

(1) To these circumstances (however inadequately they excuse such an outrage) the lately published Diary of Mr. Pepys furnish us with a key. It seems his brother, Sir William Coventry, at the time of his confinement in the Tower to prevent his intended duel with the Duke of Buckingham, expressed to Mr. Pepys much resentment at an intention of Killigrew's (then manager of the King's Theatre) to bring Sir William Coventry on the stage in a new piece, and to fix the satire indisputably on him; he was to be represented ridiculously seated at a round table of a particular construction, which he had contrived for writing. Indignant at this attempt to make him publicly laughed at, "He had told Tom Killigrew, that he should "tell his actors, whoever they were, that did offer at any "thing like representing him, that he would not complain "to my Lord Chamberlain, which was too weak, nor get

jest made (1) in the House of Commons on the King's amours gave him such offence that he desired a lasting *mark* might be set upon the offender. The Duke of Monmouth, who then commanded the guards, seems to have understood the King's words as meant in their literal sense. Two of his officers, accompanied by some of their men, waylaid Sir John Coventry in the streets near where he lived; he gallantly defended himself from their assault with the flambeau of one of his servants, but was overpowered by numbers, and a stroke given him across the nose, which cut it to the bone. The House of Commons (as may be supposed) were indignant at this outrage on one of their members, and immediately passed the act against cutting and maiming, since known by the name of him whose ill usage gave rise to it. On the Duke of Monmouth's conduct for allowing such an at-

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" him beaten as Sir Charles Sedley is said to have done, " but that he would cause *his nose to be cut.*" — *Pepys's Diary*, vol. ii. p. 312.

(1) When a tax on playhouses had been proposed as a means of raising the supplies, it was opposed by the court. " The players," it was said, were the King's servants, " and part of his pleasure. Sir John Coventry asked, " Whether did the King's pleasure lie among the men or " the women that acted?" — BURNET's *Own Times*, vol. i. p. 468.

tack to have been made through his means, and under his direction, on the person of his friend (for such Sir John Coventry was), no comment can be necessary.

We may certainly look back with satisfaction to the increased security of the laws, and to the improved authority of public opinion, when we recollect that the Irish adventurer Blood, by mere dint of undaunted impudence, and personal courage, was guilty of three separate attempts on the life of three distinguished individuals (1) in the metropolis, and not only escaped punishment, but by means of the Duke of Buckingham's ill-judged protection, succeeded in approaching the person of the careless, unprincipled King. While Blood was in jail for robbing the Jewel Office, Charles was persuaded, out of curiosity, to see and examine the person who had attempted so extraordinary a theft. In this interview he not only avowed his seizure of the Duke of Ormond, but confessed having been engaged in a design on the life of the King himself. He was to have been concealed with a

(1) The seizure of the Duke of Ormond, in St. James's street, in December 1670; the assassination of Mr. Thynne, in Pall Mall, February 1681; and the attempt on the life of the Keeper of the Jewel Office, in 1671.

carbine in the high reeds growing by the Thames side above Battersea, where the King often went to swim, but declared that "when he had taken "stand in the reeds his heart was checked with "an awe of majesty, and he did not only relent "himself, but diverted the rest of his associates "from the design." The King was either flattered by the idea of the respect which his presence had inspired to his intended assassins, or believed that by pardoning Blood he purchased security from the desperate accomplices, over whom he pretended a power of control. But not satisfied with pardoning the offences committed against himself, he actually desired the Duke of Ormond not to prosecute for the outrage from which he had suffered, gave Blood a pension, and allowed him to frequent the court.

In 1671 we find him, by Evelyn's Diary, one of a company at the Lord Treasurer Clifford's, "where dined M. de Grammont and several "French noblemen, and one Blood, that im-"pudent bold fellow, who had not long before "attempted to steal the imperial crown itself "out of the Tower. * * * * * How he came "to be pardoned and received into favour not "only after this, but several other exploits al-"most as daring, both in Ireland and here, I "never could understand. Some believed he

" became a spy of several parties, being well " with the sectaries and enthusiasts, and did " his majesty service that way. * * * * This " man had not only a daring but a villanous " unmerciful look, and a false countenance, but " very well spoken, and dangerously insinu- " ating." (1) He seems to have been a sort of fanfaron assassin, who, by the strange circumstances of the times, lived by a bad name, as others do by a good one. In his attack on the Duke of Ormond, it appears uncertain whether he meant actually to have carried him to Tyburn, and there executed him, as was pretended, or only to have confined him till he had revoked his signature to some papers, which, as Blood affirmed, had deprived him of an estate in Ireland. Whatever were his intentions, the Duke of Ormond, at past sixty years old, was attacked in his coach when returning from the public dinner given by the city to the Prince of Orange on his first visit to England in 1670. No less than six footmen always accompanied the Duke's carriage on occasions of ceremony, but as they could not all find place behind, he made them walk three and three, on each side of the pavement. The coach thus separated

(1) Evelyn's Diary, vol. i. p. 437.

from its attendants, was attacked by Blood and five associates on horseback, going up St. James's Street to Clarendon House, at the top of Albemarle Street (1), which the Duke then inhabited. He was pulled out of his carriage, tied behind one of the horsemen, and, in spite of his struggles, carried beyond that part of Piccadilly where Devonshire House now stands. Here he contrived to unhorse the man before him, and both

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(1) On part of the space now occupied by Grafton Street. This was the house built by the Lord Chancellor Clarendon, the expense of which formed one of the futile charges brought against him by the parliament. Mr. Evelyn mentions his admiration at first seeing this house, in 1665, in a letter to Lord Cornbury: — "I went with prejudices and a "critical spirit, incident to those who fancy they know any "thing in art. I acknowledge I have never seen a nobler "pile. * * * * * Here is state, and use, and solidity, "and beauty, combined. Nothing abroad pleases me better, "nothing at home approaches it." The Diary of the same person records, in little more than eighteen years, his melancholy feelings at "surveying the demolition of Clarendon "house, that costly and sumptuous palace of the late Lord "Chancellor Hyde, where I have often been so cheerful "with him, and sometimes so sad." He goes on to tell us, that it cost 50,000*l.* (an immense sum in those days), was sold, after the Chancellor's death, by his son to the young Duke of Albemarle for 25,000*l.*, and by him "to "certain rich bankers and mechanics," who gave for it and the ground 35,000*l.* They immediately pulled the whole down, sold the materials, and erected Grafton Street on a part of the space. — See Evelyn's *Diary*, vol. i. p. 561.

fell together into the street. The Duke was so spent with struggling, that when his servants came up, he was unable to speak, and they first knew him by feeling his star. His life was thus saved, but the villains escaped in the obscurity of a December night, in the then dark streets of London.

The licence of the late civil wars had accustomed the people to bold attacks on individuals, and the executive government seems to have been careless or afraid of exerting those powers which would have been necessary to restore habits of order and regularity, in which, as we have shown, the government itself was deficient.

The King set an example of libertinism, which acquired neither dignity nor decency by his practice of it. Louis the Fourteenth, not less morally guilty than Charles, by the imposing gravity of his manners, by his attention to the decorum of those of others, together with the splendid and dignified magnificence with which he encircled his pleasures, prevented both himself and his court from falling into the disrepute and disgrace which vice, in whatever rank, can only avoid, by affecting the sentiments, and, as far as possible, the outward demeanour of virtue. But Charles had lived too

long as a wanderer and an exile to re-assume with grace the stately habits of royalty. The careless ease of his manners pervaded his principles, his sentiments, and his estimation of those of others. The restraints due to public opinion, and those necessary even for the interest of his pleasures, which he practised not himself, he exacted not from his companions. His mistresses, therefore, were as deficient in the delicacy of their sentiments, as in the fidelity of their conduct, and respected themselves as little as they did him.

Of the two historians of the court of Whitehall, the one, an Englishman only by name and family, selected a hero from his adopted country, very proper to figure in the society and scenes he so gaily describes. Comte Anthony Hamilton has adorned the memoirs of his relation, the Comte de Grammont (1), with the

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(1) The Duc de St. Simon tells us, that it was the hero himself to whom the public is obliged for the publication of these memoirs: — " Ce fut lui-même, qui rendit 1800 " francs pour le manuscrit où il étoit si clairement traité de " fripon. Fontenelle, censeur de l'ouvrage, refusoit de " l'approuver par égard pour le Comte. Celui-ci s'en " plaignit au Chancelier, à qui Fontenelle dit les raisons de " son refus d'approbation. Le Comte de Grammont, moins " délicat, et ne voulant pas perdre les 1800 francs, força

graces of an unrivalled style, and much natural wit, together with a wish to make the best of the principal actors, and a good taste which certainly belonged much less to their adventures than to his lively account of them.

The other, Mrs. Manley, in a clumsy fiction, has detailed the disgraceful amours of the Duchess of Cleveland, and other intrigues of the day, with a coarseness which even her sex could not correct, and which has already consigned the Atalantis to that oblivion at which Pope significantly hinted, under the prediction of an immortality dependent on the caprices of female favour. (1)

But even the wit of Comte Hamilton, the charm of his style, and the varnish which with a light and rapid touch he passes over the characters he draws, and the adventures he relates, cannot conceal from us their depravity.

The Duchess of Cleveland rivalled Charles himself in inconstancy, and although by birth the equal of the La Valières and Montespans of

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" Fontenelle d'approuver pour l'impression. N. B. Je tiens " ce fait de Fontnelle lui-même." — *Mém. du Duc de St. Simon.*

(1) As long as Atalantis shall be read,
Or the small pillow grace a lady's bed.
Rape of the Lock.

Louis the Fourteenth, she redeemed her frailty neither by the repentance of the one, nor the wit of the other.

Her father, Viscount Grandison, had died, soon after her birth, of wounds received in the King's service at the battle of Edge Hill. She had been married the year before the Restoration to Roger Palmer, then a student in the Temple, the heir to a considerable fortune in Ireland, and two years afterwards created Earl of Castlemaine. Of him, after he had acquired his title and resigned his wife, we hear little till the next reign, except that he contrived to escape the murderous evidence of Oates and Dangerfield on the popish plot. (1.) After the accession of James, Lord Castlemaine reappears as the King's unwelcome ambassador to Pope Innocent the Eleventh. He seems to have been almost as unfortunate in the acceptance of a public employment, as he had been in the choice of a domestic companion, hardly better treated in his diplomatic capacity at Rome, than as the husband of a profligate beauty at home. He had been separated from her in 1661, after the birth of a daughter, who, although she retained the name of Palmer, was desig-

(1) See his trial in the State Trials by Howell, vol. xii. p. 598.

nated, on the confirmation of her mother's favour, by the suspicious title of the adopted daughter of the King. (1) That the avowed mistress of that King should be the wife of another man, taken from a high rank in society, and raised to the highest by his power and her misconduct, was something new to the country. For the long period of 180 years, from the days of Edward the Fourth and Jane Shore, England had witnessed no regularly-established royal mistress.

It is easy to conceive the effect this novelty must have had on all that part of the nation, whose morality was strengthened and upheld by their political principles, and whose abhorrence to kingly power and prerogative was thus confirmed by the abuse of both.

Indeed, the weakness of Charles's private life, as well as the culpable errors of his government, soon found censurers and satirists even in his own court, and among his immediate companions. They certainly anticipated all the abuse, and even exceeded the freedom with which succeeding times have treated the characters and conduct of princes. (2)

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(1) She was married, in 1674, to Thomas Lennard, Earl of Sussex.

(2) See the State Poems, and all the satires of the times.

If we may believe the scandalous chronicle of the day, the Duchess of Cleveland had no right to complain of the King's inconstancy, or of the associates he gave her in his favour. The admirer of Jacob Hall the rope-dancer could not reproach the King with a passion for Nell Gwinne.

But although her jealousy was excited neither by delicacy of sentiment nor constancy of attachment, she was sufficiently roused when the King's volatile fancy seemed about to settle upon any body likely to share the empire she assumed in his court, or to curtail the means of supporting the expensive habits in which she lived.

Violent in temper, and libertine in disposition, she was insatiable in her demands for money, and perfectly insensible to the odium which the King's blindness or indifference to her extravagance and infidelity entailed upon him (1) as well as herself. Too much given up to her own indulgences to attempt acquiring any considerable influence in politics, the circle which surrounded her at Whitehall was composed of all

(1) See a mock speech made for the King on the opening the session of parliament in 1676, State Poems, vol. iii. p. 84.

the young, the gay, and the licentious, who while treading the path of pleasure with their dissolute monarch, were glad to suppose themselves in the road to preferment by his favour. When he had at last shaken off her yoke, and placed himself under the still more disgraceful bondage of the Duchess of Portsmouth, paid by France to make his pleasures subservient to the purposes of that government, and to the dishonour of his own, the Duchess of Cleveland claimed the continuance of his protection in a manner which proved how little she deserved it. In a letter yet extant she avows her continued frailties, without either repentance or shame, and seems only anxious still to associate the degraded King in her private piques, and still to make him a party in her disgraceful amours. This letter is addressed by her to Charles from Paris in 1678, and is characteristic at once of the vulgarity of her mind, and the licentiousness of her conduct.

It is curious, too, from the unbounded belief in predictions and judicial astrology which it supposes in the King, and for the severe truths which the writer tells him through the mouth of the enemy whom she was labouring to ruin. It was copied literatim by Gray the poet, about the year 1762, and is thus endorsed by him: "Copy "of a letter from the Duchess of Cleveland to

" Charles the Second, from the original, now in " the Earl of Berkshire's hands (1731). This is " the letter mentioned by Burnet in his history " 1678, which ruined Montague with the King, " and he came over upon it, without being re- " called, the Earl of Sunderland succeeding him " as ambassador. The astrologer is probably " the same person whom the Queen Mother, and " her favourite, the Lord Jermyn, recommended " to the King in January 1656, as having ex- " actly foretold all that befell the Cardinal Ma- " zarine and the Prince of Condé. He was a " Hugenot gentleman, born in France, but of " Irish parentage. (1)

Although this letter has been printed in the appendix to Harris's life of Charles the Second, it is so illustrative of the character of the court, as well as of the Duchess of Cleveland, that it may not be unacceptable to the reader.

THE DUCHESS OF CLEVELAND TO CHARLES THE SECOND.

Paris, Tuesday 28th, 1678.

I was never so surprised in my holle life time as I was at my coming hither to find my Lady

(1) See Thurlow's Papers, vol. i. p. 678. and 691.

Sussex (1) gone from my house and monestry, where I left her, and this letter from her which I here send you the copy of. I never in my holle life time heard of such government of herself as she has had since I went into England. She has never been in the monestry two days together, but every day gone out with the embassadour, (2)

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(1) Anne Palmer, her daughter, born in 1660, married in 1674 to Thomas Lennard, Earl of Sussex.

(2) Ralph Montagu, second son of Edward, Lord Montagu, of Boughton. He was first sent ambassador to France, in 1669, by Charles the Second, and afterwards made master of the great wardrobe; both of which appointments he lost (it is believed) from the effect of this letter. He was created Viscount Mounthermer and Earl of Montagu, by William and Mary, in 1689, and Duke of Montagu, by Queen Anne, in 1705. He married Elizabeth, daughter of Thomas Wriottesley, Earl of Southampton, half sister to Rachael Lady Russell, and widow of Joceline Percy, the last Earl of Northumberland. It is of this lady, and of Montagu's attentions to her before their marriage was settled, that Madame de la Fayette gives the following account, in a letter to Madame de Sevigné, dated the 15th of April, 1673: — "Madame de Northumberland me "vint voir hier; j'avois été la chercher avec Madame de "Coulanges: elle me parut une femme qui a été fort belle, "mais qui n'a plus un seul trait de visage que se soutienne, "ni où il soit resté le moindre air de jeunesse; j'en fus "surprise; elle est avec cela mal habillie, point de grâce, "enfin, je n'en fus point du tout eblouie. Elle me parut "entendre fort bien tout ce qu'on dit, ou pour mieux dire, "tout ce que je dis, car j'étois seule. M. de la Roche-

and has often layen four days together at my house, and sent for her meat to the embassadour, he being alwaies with her 'till five o'clock in the morning, they two shut up together alone, and would not let my maître-d'hôtel wait, nor any of my servants, onely the embassadours. This has made so great a noise at Paris, that she is now the wholle discours. I am so afflicted that I can hardly write this for crying, that a child that I doated on, as I did on her, should make me so ill a return, and join with the worst of men to ruin me; for sure never any malice was like the embassadours, that onely because I would not answer to his love, and the importunities he made to me (1), was resolved to ruin me. I hope your Majesty will yet have that justice and consideration for me, that (tho' I have done a foolish action) you will not let me be ruined by this most abominable man.

" foucault et M. de Thianges qui avoient envie de la voir, " ne vinrent que comme elle sortoit. Montagu m'avoit " mandé qu'elle viendroit me voir: je lui ai fort parlé d'elle; " il ne fait aucune façon d'être embarqué à son service, et " paroit très rempli d'espérance." — *Lettres de Madame de Sévigné*, vol. ii. p. 340.

(1) Other readings of the scandalous chronicle say, that the converse of this statement was the true cause of the Duchess's complaints of Montagu, and that he did *not* reply to her importunities. — See *Burnet*, vol. i. p. 422. fol. edit.

I do confess to you, that I did write a foolish letter to the Chevalier de Chatilion, which letter I sent enclosed to Madame de Pallas, and sent hers in a packet I sent my Lady Sussex, by Sir Harry Tychborn, which letters she has either given to the embassadour, or else he had it by his man, to whom Sir Harry Tychborn gave it, not finding my Lady Sussex; but as yet I do not know which of the waies he had it, but I shall know, as soon as I have spoke with Sir Harry Tychborn; but the letter he has, and I doubt not but he either has, or will send it to you. Now all that I have to say for myself is, that you know, as to love, one is not mistress of one self, and that you ought not to be offended with me, since all thinges of this nature is at an end with you and I; so that I could do you no prejudice; nor will you (I hope) follow the advice of this ill man, who in his hart I know hates you; and were it for his interest would ruin you too, if he could; for he has neither conscience nor honour, and has several times told me that in his hart he despised you and your brother, and that for his part, he wished with all his hart, that the Parliament would send you both to travell; for that you were a dull ungovernable fool, and the Duke a willful fool; so that it was yet better to

have you than him; but that you alwaies chose a greater beast than yourself to govern you; and when I was to come over, he brought me two letters to bring to you, which he read both to me before he sealed them: the one was a mans, that (he sayd) you had great faith in; for that he had several times fortold things to you, that were of consequence, and that you believed him in all things, like a changeling as you were, and that now he had writ you word, that in a few months the King of France or his son were threatened with death, or at least a great fit of illness, in which they would be in great danger, if they did not die, and that therefore he counsel'd you to defer any resolutions of war or peace till some months were past; for that if this happened, it would make a great change in France. The embassadour, after he had read this to me, said, "Now the good of this is (says he), that I can do what I will with this man; for he is poor, and a good sum of money will make him write whatever I will." So he proposed to me, that he and I should join together in ruining my Lord Treasurer (1) and the Duchess of Portsmouth, which might be

(1) Sir Thomas Osborne, Lord Danby, afterwards Duke of Leeds, appointed Lord High Treasurer August, 1673.

done thus. This man, tho' he was infirm and ill, should go into England, and there after he had been a little time, to solicit you for money, (for that you were so base, that tho' you employed him, you let him starve, so that he was obliged to give him 50*l.*, and that the man had writ several times to you for money) — "oh! (says he) when he is in England, he shall tell the King things, that he forsees will infallibly ruin him, and so wish those to be removed, as having an ill star that would be unfortunate to you, if they were not removed, but if that were done, he was confident you would have the gloriousest reign that ever was. This (says he) I am sure I can order so as to bring to a good effect, if you will; and in the mean time I will try to get Secretary Coventry's place (1), which he has a mind to part with, but not to Sir William Temple, because he is the Treasurer's creature, and he hates the Treasurer; and I have already employed my sister (2) to talk with Mr. Cook, and to send him to engage Mr. Coventry not to part with it as yet, and he has assured my

(1) Sir William Coventry, appointed Secretary of State July, 1672.

(2) Elizabeth Montagu, married to Sir Daniel Harvey, who had been ambassador to Constantinople.

Lady Harvey he will not, and my Lord Treasurer's lady (1) and Mr. Bertie (2) are both of them desirous I should have it; and when I have it, I will be damned if I don't quickly get to be Lord Treasurer, and then you and your children shall find such a friend as never was; and for the King, I will find a way to furnish him so easily with money for his pocket and his wenches, that he will quickly oust Bab. May, and lead the King by the nose." So when I had heard him out, I told him, I thanked him, but that I would not meddle in any such thing, and that, for my part, I had no malice to my Lady Portsmouth or the Treasurer, and therefore would never be in any plot to destroy them; but that I found the character the world gave of him was true, which was, that the devil was not more artful or designing than he was, and that I wondered at it; for that sure, all these things working in his brains must make him very uneasy, and would at last make him mad. 'Tis possible you may think I say this out of malice: 'tis true he has urged me beyond all patience; but what I tell you here

(1) Lady Bridget Bertie, second daughter of Montagu Bertie, Earl of Lindsey.

(2) Peregrine Bertie, brother to the above lady.

is most true, and I will take the sacrament of it, whenever you please. 'Tis certain I would not have been so base as to have informed against him, for what he sayed before me, had he not provoked me to it in this violent way that he has. There is no ill thing which he has not done to me, and that without any provocation of mine, but that I would not love him. Now as to what relates to my daughter Sussex, and her behaviour to me, I must confess that afflicts me beyond expression, and will do much more, if what she has done be by your orders; for tho' I have an entire submission to your will, and will not complain of whatever you inflict upon me, yet I cannot think you would have brought things to this extremity with me, and not have it in your nature ever to do no cruel thing to any thing living. I hope, therefore, you will not begin with me, and if the ambassador has not received his order from you, that you will severely reprehend him for this inhuman proceeding: besides, he has done what you ought to be very angry with him for; for he has been with the King of France, and told him that he had intercepted letters of mine by your order, who had been informed that there was a kindness between me and the Chevalier de Chatilion; and therefore you bid

him take a course in it, and stop my letters, which accordingly he has done, and that upon this you ordered him to take my children from me, and to remove my Lady Sussex to another monestry, and that you were resolved to stop all my pensions, and never to have any regard for me in any thing, and that if he would oblige your Majesty, he should forbid the Comte de Chatilion ever seeing me, upon the displeasure of losing his place and being forbid the court, for that he was sure you expected this from him. Upon which, the King told him that he could not do any thing of this nature; for that this was a private matter, and not for him to take notice of, and that he could not imagine you would be so angry, or indeed to be at all concerned; for that all the world knew that all things of gallantry were at an end with you and I. That being so, and so public, he did not see why you should be offended at my loving any body. That it was a thing so common now-a-days, to have a gallantry, that he did not wonder at any thing of this nature. And when he saw the King take the thing thus, he told him, that if he would not be severe to the Chevalier de Chatilion upon your account, he supposed he would be so upon his own; for that in the letters he had discovered, he found

that the Chevalier had proposed to me the engaging of you in the marriage of the Dauphin and Mademoiselle, and that was my greatest busyness into England; that before I went over I had spoke to him of the thing, and would have engaged him in it, but that he refused it; for that he knew very well the indifference you had, whether it were or no, and how little you cared how Mademoiselle was married. That since I went to England 'twas possible I might engage somebody or other in the matter to press it to you, but that he knew pretty well, that in your hart you cared not whether it was or no, that this business sett on foot by the Chevalier. Upon which the King told him, that if he would show him any letters of the Chevalier de Chatilion to that purpose, he should then know what he had to say to them; but that till he saw those letters, he would not punish him without a proof for what he did. Upon which the ambassador showed a letter, which he pretended one part of it was a *double entendre*. The King said he could not see there was any thing relating to it, and so left him, and said to a person that was there, "Sure the ambassador was the worst man that ever was, for because my Lady Cleveland will not love him, he strives to ruin her the basest in the

world, and would have me sacrifice the Chevalier de Chatilion to his revenge, which I will not do, till I see better proofs of his having meddled with the marriage of the Dauphin and Mademoiselle, than any yet that the ambassador has showed me." This, methinks, is what you cannot but be offended at, and I hope you will be offended with him for his whole proceeding to me, and let the world see that you will never countenance the actions of so ill a man. I had forgot to tell you, that he told the King of France, that many people had reported that he made love to me, but that there was nothing of it, for he had too much respect for you to think of such a thing. As for my Lady Sussex, I hope you will think fit to send for her over, for she is now mightily discoursed of for the ambassador. If you will not believe me in this, make enquiry into the thing, and you will find it to be true. I have desired Mr. Kemble to give you this letter, and to discourse with you more at large upon this matter, to know your resolution, and whether I may expect that justice and goodness from you, which all the world does. I promise you that for my conduct it shall be such, as that you nor nobody shall have occasion to blame me; and I hope you will be just to what you said to me, which was at my

house, when you told me you had letters of mine, you said, " Madam all that I ask of you for your own sake is, live so for the future as to make the least noise you can, and I care not who you love." (1) Oh, this noise, that is, had never been, had it not been for the ambassador's malice. I cannot forbear once again saying, I hope you will not gratify his malice in my ruine.

After the perusal of this letter, we must allow that if the morals of women are not in fact much improved, their sentiments are at least somewhat refined and their mode of communicating them somewhat less offensive. No gentlewoman could now be the author of such a letter. A courtezan would hardly avow such morality, and a housemaid would express herself in better English.

The old age of the Duchess of Cleveland

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(1) Aware, as the King seems to have been, by these words, of the Duchess of Cleveland's character, one must wonder at his giving any credit to a letter so visibly dictated by malice and disappointment.

was such as might have been expected from her preceding life. In her latter days she contracted a marriage with a person distinguished in the annals of gallantry by the title of *Beau Fielding*. He was indeed of the ancient and noble family of the Earls of Denbigh. In the Tatler, where his character is given under the name of *Orlando the Fair*, it is remarked that on the painting of his carriage was displayed an eagle, which is the blazon of that family as descendants from an elder branch of the Counts of Hapsbourg, now on the throne of Austria. The title of *Beau* Fielding, it would seem, was merited by his remarkable personal beauty. This he took every occasion to display, and every means to augment by dress and decoration. The admiration he inspired, and the success he obtained, made him a coxcomb. His vanity led him to mistake notoriety for distinction. His equipage, his own dress, and that of his servants, all differed from those of the rest of the world. His servants wore yellow coats with black sashes, and black feathers (the Austrian colours), and he himself appeared sometimes in a dress quite differing from the form of the day, sometimes exceeding it both in fashion, make, and magnificence. The particulars given of him

in the Tatler (1), and those we learn from his trial for bigamy (for it was thus his marriage with the Duchess of Cleveland was dissolved), curiously mark the difference between the gay, bullying, boasting *beau* of that day, and the grave, solemn, negligent coxcomb of this; the one professing idleness, and jealous of being supposed to know any thing beyond the ritual of a fine gentleman, or to bestow time upon any thing but love, the tavern, and the ladies; the other affecting occupation that he has not, shielding his insignificance under the mask of business, his dulness under that of gravity, and recommending himself to women by professing inattention to them. Less fortunate indeed than his predecessor, who was always able to distinguish himself and soar above his competitors by the richness of his embroidery or the breadth of his lace, the fine gentleman of the present day, after the most laudable exertions, often finds it cruelly difficult to mark his individuality, amidst a host of pretenders, all arrayed in the same blue coat, as well as the same affectation of character.

The Duchess of Cleveland died within two

(1) Tatler, Nos. 51. and 52.

years after the rupture of this incongruous marriage, at the age of sixty-seven. Like all females elevated into public notice by beauty only, unsupported either by virtue or talents, her old age was contemptible and her death unregretted, even by the children who owed their elevation to her favour.

CHAPTER II.

EFFECTS OF THE RESTORATION ON FEMALE MANNERS AND SOCIAL EXISTENCE. — MARRIAGES OF THE YOUNG NOBILITY. — THE TALENTS OF WOMEN ENTIRELY NEGLECTED IN THEIR EDUCATION. — LADY FALKLAND. — DUCHESS OF NEWCASTLE. — INFREQUENCY AND DULNESS OF PRIVATE LETTERS. — DIARY OF THE FIRST LADY BURLINGTON. — LETTERS OF LADY RUSSELL AND LADY SUNDERLAND. — CARDS AND PLAY CONFINED TO THE COURT. — FALSE IDEA OF THE MANNERS OF ENGLAND GIVEN BY THE WRITERS OF THE DAY.

EXCEPT within the circle of Whitehall no habitual intercourse of society seems to have taken place in London, even among those whom similarity of taste or disposition might have made agreeable to each other. Persons formally visited and received visits from their own family and connections only. No women frequented the court, or formed any part of its society, except those attached to the households of the royal family, or whose parents or connections were employed by them; indeed, the *Court* and *Country* soon began to form two separate parties, which had very little in common with each other. The difference observable in

their manners, and habits of life, were most decided in every thing that related to female society. There can hardly be a stronger proof that women have never obtained any considerable influence on the national manners of England, than that even during the first popularity of a reign distinguished for its gallantry and devotion to women, the sex in general seemed to have gained little or nothing on the score of social enjoyment. The mistresses of Charles acquired none of the consideration which he lost in their society: their venality made them despicable even to those who profited by it, and their example harmless to the rest of their sex. Lord Clarendon had forbidden his wife from visiting Lady Castlemain immediately after the Restoration, although her father Lord Grandison had been his friend. (1) Pique, at this neglect, was supposed to have made her active among his enemies at the time of his dismissal from office.

Many families of high rank and opulent fortunes continued living exclusively in the country; satisfied with the advantages of their restored possessions, and with the amusements that their hounds, their horses, and their neighbours, afforded. To such persons, London exhibited

(1) King James's Memoirs, vol. i. p. 428.

few inducements to draw them from their dignified residences in the country; and the metropolis and its society could derive little brilliancy from their occasional presence.

All the old comedies are filled with the complaints of women against the dulness of their lives. Mrs. Hutchinson says, " her husband's " design was to draw her into his owne country, " but he would not set upon it too roughly, and, " therefore, lett her rest awhile, when he had " drawne her ten miles nearer it (to Richmond), " out of the city, where she had her birth and " education, and where all her relations were " most conversant, and which she could not re- " solve to quitt, for altogether, to betake herself " to the north, which was a formidable name " among the London ladies." (1)

On the other hand, a *journey to London* was considered in times subsequent to those of which we are now speaking as often involving in ruin, as well as ridicule, a country gentleman's family. The characters and the adventures of the Wrongheads, as first written by Sir John Vanburgh, in 1673, exhibit probably no very exaggerated picture. The pert conceit of Miss Jenny, and the low pursuits of Squire Richard, were to be found

(1) Mrs. Hutchinson's Life of Colonel Hutchinson.

in many a mansion-house, in the distant counties, to the very end of the 18th century; and it may be doubted if the Lady Wrongheads, who believe that by imitating the vices of their superiors they assimilate themselves to their graces, are yet quite extinct.

The respectable part of the sex in general, even those of the highest rank, were unknown out of the circle of their own families and relations; where they were occupied entirely with the concerns of their household, the management of their affairs, and the establishment of their daughters. This last object was, indeed, pursued by very different means from those which have been deemed expedient by the no less attached mothers of later days. The marriages of the young nobility were then contracted much in the same manner that they continued to be, long after, in France. The proposal was first made, and agreed to by the parents, before the parties had any opportunities of becoming acquainted, or making themselves agreeable to each other. Sometimes, as may be supposed, this proposal was anticipated by the sentiments of the young people; and sometimes, again, as in France, recourse was had to royal favour and protection, to reconcile these sentiments to the interested views of prudent parents. In the

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diary of Lady Burlington, already cited, we find Laurence Hyde, the Chancellor Clarendon's second son, availing himself of the interest of his sister, the Duchess of York, and of his dawning favour with Charles the Second, to persuade Lady Burlington to permit his hitherto rejected addresses to the Lady Henrietta Boyle, her fifth daughter, under a promise from the King of especial favour and advancement. (1)

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(1) "On the 6th of March, 1664, her Highnesse ye "Duchesse of Yorke made me a proposall for a marriage "betwixt her brother Mr. Laurence Hyde, and my "daughter Henrietta; and I returned her my L^ds and my "answere ye 8^th, whereof she discourst w^th her father the "L^d Chancellor. March the 18^th, I rec^d my L^d Chan-"cellor's proposalls of what he would settle upon his son "Laur^ce. Ye 20^th, I return'd account of it, to ye Duchesse, "as nott satisfactorye.

"The 26th March being Easter day, I acquainted Mr. "Hyde with his father's proposalls to my L^d and me, and "that we both thought y^m verye short of our expectations, "of w^t was most requisitt for his own and our daughter's "future support in a married condition; for wh^ch he y^n "exprest a passionate greefe.

"April the 7^th. He came to me in one of the galleries at "Whitehall, begging to know if y^t obstacle of a fortune "were removed, and if made out suitable to what we "desired, if then he might have any hopes of admittance; "to w^ch I replyed, that on such termes possibly he might "be admitted.

"April the 10^th. My sister Ranelaugh visitted the "Chancellor, to whom he exprest his trouble at our "demurre. Ye 11^th. He did the same to my b^r Orrerye

In cases of large fortune, and great connections, marriages were often contracted before the persons so disposed of could have any opinion or choice in the matter. Lady Arlington's only child, Lady Isabella Bennett, was formally married to the Duke of Grafton (son of Charles the Second by the Duchess of Cleveland) when she was only five, and he eight years old. The Archbishop of Canterbury performed the ceremony, and the King and all the court were present. This wedding must have been meant merely as a sort of fête, for the amusement of the King (1); as it was thought proper to re-marry them, when she was twelve, and he

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" April the 24th. His Mtye himself verye particularly " recommended Mr. Hyde to my Lds acceptance, promising " to be verye carefull of his preferme; when upon having " first conjured our daughter to deale frankly wth us, and " trulye inform'd her everye particular of ye treatye, which " was onlye offer'd her in case she approved; leaving it " wholly to her choice, uppon her declaring her inclin- " ations for it, we yn admitted Mr. Hyde to make his ad- " dresse to her." — *Lady Burlington's Diary, Dev. MSS.*

(1) Madame de Mazarin relates a somewhat similar amusement arranged by her uncle, the Cardinal, for the court of Anne of Austria, from a coarse and disgusting trick imposed, by his order, on the extreme youth and innocence of her sister, Marie Anne Mancini, a child of eight years old, which could only serve to supply improper jests and allusions by way of relief to the ennui of a corrupted court.

sixteen years old. Mr. Evelyn, who was present at both the meetings, tells us (1), "the cere-"mony was performed in my Lord Chamberlain's "(Lord Arlington's) lodgings at Whitehall, by "the Bishop of Rochester, his Majesty being "present. A sudden and unexpected thing, "when every body thought the first marriage "would come to nothing. But the measure "being determined, I was privately invited by "my Lady her mother to be present. I "confess I could give her little joy, and so "I plainly told her; but she said the King "would have it so, and there was no going "back. * * * * I staid supper, where his "Majesty sat between the Duchess of Cleve-"land (mother of the Duke of Grafton) and the "sweet Duchess the bride: there were several "great persons and ladies without pomp."

The Lady Elizabeth Percy, daughter and heiress of Joceline Percy, the last Earl of Northumberland, was contracted, when only twelve years old, to the Earl of Ogle, only son of the Duke of Newcastle, and he dying the next year, she was again married to Mr. Thynne, the same person murdered by Count Koningsmarck before their cohabitation. The year after she married Charles, the sixth Duke of Somerset,

(1) See Evelyn's Diary, vol. i. p. 513.

and was thus twice a widow, and a third time married at the age of fifteen. (1)

These instances however were rare, and when we see, in the life of Mrs. Hutchinson, her account of her courtship and marriage, the admirable detail she gives of her husband's sentiments and conduct towards her (2), and her own appreciation of her happiness; we shall acknowledge with pride, as well as pleasure, that

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(1) See, in the Memoirs of James the Second by himself, another proposed destination of this Lady. The Duke of Buckingham offering to persuade her mother, the Countess of Northumberland, to give her "*to Harry Jermyn,*" Lord St. Alban's nephew and heir.

(2) "Never was there a passion more ardent and lesse "idolatrous; he loved her better than his life, with inex- "pressable tenderness and kindness; had a most obliging "esteem of her; yet still considered honour, religion, and "duty above her — nor ever suffered the intrusion of such "a dotage, as should blind him from marking her imper- "fections: these he looked upon with such an indulgent "eye, as did not abate his love and esteem for her, while it "augmented his care to blot out all those spots which "might make her appear less worthy of that respect he "paid her. * * * * * Never man had a greater passion for "a woman, nor a more honourable esteem for a wife; yet "he was not uxorious, nor remitted that just rule, which it "was her honour to obey; but managed the reines of go- "vernment with such prudence and affection, that she, who "would not delight in such an honourable and advantageous "objection, must have wanted a reasonable soule."— *Mrs. Hutchinson's Memoirs of her Husband.*

domestic felicity, founded on mutual and voluntary preference, was already domiciliated in England.

It might seem that the accomplishments, and the various modes of occupying time, universally taught to our young women now, would have been more usefully and necessarily bestowed at a period when the whole female sex lived so much more in seclusion, both from the interruptions, and the improvement arising from worldly society. Certain it is, that, generally speaking, they possessed few of the means of self-amusement, now in the hands of almost all the world. Music was cultivated by none but those whose strong natural taste, and talent for it, made them overcome all obstacles in its pursuit. Drawing, or any taste for the fine arts, seems never to have been thought of, either as an employment of the hands, or as a cultivation of the mind; although such a taste is perhaps the more peculiarly desirable for women, because it furnishes a source of conversation free from scandal, and from all idle and vulgar enquiries into the affairs of others. No woman really possessing such a taste will ever be a gossip. Reading, except for some express purpose, was hardly esteemed an amusement among the young men of the world, far

less among the young women. The romances of the day, unlike the modern furniture of a circulating library, were serious voluminous works; whose perusal was scarcely undertaken except by those who had a turn for study, and solitary occupation in the long leisure of a country life.

The divine poetry of Milton (as has been justly observed by a modern critic) was little celebrated, not from an absence of taste, but from a paucity of readers. Letter-writing, according to modern habits, was little practised for many years after this period. In spite, therefore, of the numberless tapestry chairs, carpets, beds, and hangings, now for the most part discarded in rags from the garrets of their grand-daughters, an unsatisfied curiosity yet remains, as to the amusements of the younger women, whose fortune and rank elevated them above the common every-day household cares of existence. The private letters of the times, yet preserved, for the very reasons above mentioned, furnish us with little information. Those that are not written expressly on some family business, evince none of the ease in composition, so necessary for familiar details. They all betray a great ignorance of the language, of its grammar, and its spelling, and often a want of

facility in the mechanical part of writing, which proves how little it was practised.

The wife of the first Duke of Ormonde, daughter and heiress of Preston Earl of Desmond, Carte tells us, in the life of her husband, "understood all sort of business, in which it "came in her way to be concerned, perfectly "well, and wrote upon them with great clear-"ness of comprehension, and strength of ex-"pression." Yet her guardian, Rich Earl of Holland, had taken so little care of her education, as not to have had her even taught to write; "but she learnt it herself, by copying "after print, for which reason she never joined "her letters together."(1)

The correspondence of *Sacarissa*, whose wit as well as beauty has immortalized the name of Dorothy Sidney, Countess of Sunderland, is absolutely deficient both in style and spelling. The letters lately published addressed to her son-in-law, the Marquis of Halifax, are evidently written to convey to him the news of the day, with a further intention of courting his approbation, and support of her son's (2) administration,

(1) Carte's Life of the Duke of Ormonde, p. 537. fol. ed.

(2) Robert, second Earl of Sunderland, whose time-serving politics ended in his disgrace at the Revolution.

who was then secretary of state. They display much acquaintance with, and interest in, the political affairs of the time, and give some curious particulars of society towards the end of the reign of Charles the Second. But still these particulars, and this society, are those of the court, and the pleasure with which she talks of meeting Lord Halifax at Althorpe, and at Rufford, seems much more connected with politics, than with any proposed enjoyment of society, or of the country. The Diary already quoted, of the first Countess of Burlington, who appears to have been a person of superior prudence, and good conduct in the affairs of life, and much considered and respected by all those connected with her, this Diary, which extends through the interesting period which elapsed from the year 1635 to 1688, is chiefly filled with the dates of the marriages of her daughters, the births of her grandchildren, the journies she undertakes to and from Ireland, and the alterations she was perpetually making in the settlement of her great property (1), and of its disposition in her will. Not a word of any other occupations that interest her, of any public events, of any amuse-

(1) She was the only child and heiress of the last Earl of Cumberland, of the family of Clifford.

ments of which she partook, or of any society in which she lived, except short memoranda of the royal suppers, already quoted in a foregoing note, and an account of a visit from Anne Hyde Duchess of York, the very day before she died. This, from the particular circumstances in which it took place, and the simple detail which is given of them, the reader may like to see.

"Thursday, the 30th March, 1670.

"Her R. H. the Duchess of York, then in a "very languishing state, was brought in a sedan "to my house, telling me she came to take her "leave of me, having now wholly laid aside all "thoughts of this world, and fixed them on a "better. She was carried into a green walk in "my garden, and walked some steps herself, but "growing faint, returned into her sedan, and "was carried into the terrace walk, where she "fixedly looked upon Clarendon garden (1) and "was then brought upp into my chamber, and "laid to rest uppon the bed for the space of an "hour, where she could not sleep, but oft dis-"coursed to my Lord, to Mr. Jermyn, and us "about her, of her willingness to die, and that in

(1) Clarendon house and garden were on the site of Grafton Street.

" the most significant expressions, and then got
" upp, and did eat more heartily than she had
" done, for some time afore. As soon as she
" had eaten, the Duke (of York) came in, and
" after a little space trying to rest herself, they
" went back to St. James's, where her great
" pains more and more seized her, yett as long
" as she could speak she appeared most sensible,
" and afterwards lay quiet, as if she were asleep,
" without any struggling, incident to the pangs
" of death, wheroffe I was a witness, and soe
" she continued till she departed this life, be-
" twixt two and three in the afternoon, on Fri-
" day the last of March."

Even Lady Russell, whose letters and whose conduct prove every superior endowment, both of heart and understanding, was deficient in those common acquirements, now professed by all her country-women, although they must still look up to her exalted character, as the yet unrivalled ornament of their sex and nation.

The learned habits of the age of Elizabeth, had been first acquired by the Reformation, which, putting the Scriptures into the hands of the public, had excited a spirit of enquiry possessing the charm of novelty, as well as the merit of superior and more informed piety. This disposition to study, which had produced some good female

scholars (now hardly known but in the dull pages of "Ballard's learned Ladies,") was already almost worn out in retirement, by a studious few, without having communicated any taste or emulation to the sex in general for mental acquirements. Those who had attained them, instead of becoming more agreeable or more intelligent members of society, were in general so estranged from the world and its ways, and from the duties of their sex and situation, that their example was little likely to be followed by others, whose more natural dispositions inclined them to please, and to live like the rest of the world.

The all-occupying devotion of Lettice Lady Falkland was as little likely to make piety popular, as the fantastic and voluminous works of the fantastic Duchess of Newcastle, were to encourage the rational cultivation of the mind.

The biographer of Lady Falkland tells us, that "she first spent some hours every day in her pri-"vate devotions; these were called by those of "her family her busie hours. * * * * Then her "maids came into her chamber early every "morning, and ordinarily she passed about an "hour with them, in praying, catechising and in-"structing them. To these secret and private "prayers, the public Morning and Evening

" Prayer of the Church, before dinner and " supper, and another forme, together with read- " ing scriptures and singing psalms, before bed- " time, were daily and constantly added." (1)

The Duchess of Newcastle tells us in the prefatory address to her husband, prefixed to her account of his life, that "it pleased God to command " his servant Nature to indue me with a poetical " and philosophical genius, even from my birth, " for I did write some books in that kind before " I was twelve years of age, which, for want of " good method and order, I would never di- " vulge." She goes on to tell us, that she afterwards applied "to the reading of philosophical " authors, on purpose to have those names and " words of art that are used in schools," and that after these her studies, her "readers did wonder, " and thought it impossible that a woman could " have so much learning and understanding, in " terms of art and scholastical expressions."

The Restoration and its consequences certainly did not favour serious studies; and however a certain taste for literature and for its cultivation became fashionable among men, among the

(1) " *The Holy Life and Death of the Lady Lettice* " *Viscountess Falkland, by* JOHN DUNCAN PARSON (*quer-* " *tered*), London, 1653.

other sex it was never even thought of as an accomplishment. From this time till towards the middle of the ensuing century, we find the education of women so narrowed in its principles and neglected in its details, that ignorance, prejudice, and idleness of mind became inevitable. Early in the reign of Queen Anne (her own character an example of the ill effects of such an education) the sex was coarsely reproached and satirised for their ignorance by a man (1) whose base and cruel conduct in his intimate relations with women, as little authorized him to be their critic, as his mean and prejudiced opinions to be their adviser.

The long disuse of all theatrical entertainments, and afterwards the profligacy of the restored theatre, had made it little frequented by the more sober part of the community. When a mask was recurred to by the female sex to spare blushes, which in any unsought situation they knew so well became them, we may be assured how little the theatre could have been frequented by respectable women. Masks of black velvet, or vizors, as they were then called, had at first been resorted to by those only who, in spite of an admiration for

(1) Swift.

the theatre, felt ashamed of the language and manners it presented to them. (1) But the mask soon (as may be supposed) became a passport to others, who had nothing to lose on the score of manners. (2) A fashion subject to such abuse was entirely left off by the better order of women, long before the language of the stage, or the structure of the pieces represented, were such as could have been listened to with an unblushing front by those possessing the improved manners and purified diction of the present times. The revolution which so seasonably took place in the political sentiments and government of the country, by no means extended to the theatre; and we observe with surprise some of our most exceptionable comedies

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(1) "The fair sat panting at a courtier's play
And not a mask went unimproved away."
Pope's Essay on Criticism, vol. iii. p. 120

(2) Colley Cibber, speaking of the indecent liberties which dramatic writers took with their wit, says, "I "remember the ladies were then observed to be decently "afraid of venturing to a new comedy, until they were "assured they might do it without any risk of an insult to "their modesty; or if their curiosity was too strong for their "patience, they took care at least to save appearances, and "rarely came the first night but in masks, then daily "worn, and admitted in to the pit and the side boxes and "gallery." — *Apology for the Life of Colley Cibber*

in point of morality and decency, both of sentiments and language, brought forward during the reign of the austere William, and even during the life of his queen, upheld as a model of piety and conjugal virtues. Congreve's *Old Bachelor* appeared in 1693; Vanburgh's *Relapse* in 1697, and his *Provoked Wife* the next year. The first has long ceased to be acted at all; and of the other two, the one had changed its name, and a great part of the arrangement of the plot, and the other much of its very exceptionable dialogue, before their admirable wit, and true comic gaiety, could be presented for the entertainment of a more refined, if not a more moral age.

The horror of the sectaries for cards, and all games of chance, had universally discredited them throughout the country, and even prevented their general adoption among the republican troops in their intervals of inaction. In France, on the contrary, habits of gaming had been extended, and confirmed, during the irregularities of the Fronde. (1) These habits

(1) Madame de Sevigné says, December 1678—"Pour re-"venir à la Bassette, c'est une chose qu'on ne se peut repré-"senter. On y perd bien cent mille pistoles en un soir.—Le "Roi paroit fâché de ces excès. Monsr. a mis toutes ses "pierreries en gage."—*Lettres de Sevigné*, tom. v. p. 384.

accompanied the exiled royalists on their return to England, but were still chiefly confined to the precincts of the Court, and indeed formed one of the principal attractions of its society. Count Hamilton, with his usual talent of couching satiric truth under the witty expression of apparent admiration, sufficiently informs us of the motive of his hero, the Comte de Grammont, for endeavouring to assist the Duchess of Cleveland in extorting some pecuniary advantages from the King. Her counsellor made one of her party at Bassette every night; and his good luck at play allowed him to anticipate the share he should have in her increased revenue. The name of this game, and of its rival *Ombre* (1), indicate their foreign origin. To the Duchess of Cleveland's assemblies, for the express purpose of play, succeeded in chronological order those of the Duchess of Portsmouth, and of Madame de Mazarin, then resident in London. The Duchess of Cleveland had gone to Paris about the year 1672 or 1673, when the duchess of Portsmouth was installed in magnificent apartments within the limits of Whitehall Palace. Evelyn in his Diary more than once mentions

(1) The derivation of Ombre, is from the Spanish *Hombre a tres*, the man among three.

their costly furniture. He says in 1683, that they had been two or three times pulled down "and rebuilt to satisfy her prodigal and expensive "pleasures; whilst her majestie's does not ex- "ceed some gentlemen's ladies in furniture and "accommodation. Here I saw the new fabric "of French tapestry, for design, tenderness of "work, and incomparable imitation of the best "paintings, beyond any thing I had ever be- "held. * * * * * Then for Japan cabinets, "screens, pendule clocks, great vases of wrought "plate, tables, stands, chimney furniture, sconces, "branches, braseras, &c. all of massive silver, "and out of number, besides some of his Ma- "jestie's best paintings."

Madame de Mazarin was likewise lodged within the precincts of Whitehall. The works of St. Evremond, her friend and contemporary in England, are full of lively remonstrances against her constant occupation at play. In these we learn the names of most of her English associates at Bassette. Among them we find *La belle Middleton*, of the Mémoires de Grammont. In the verses which he calls *Scène de Bassette*, he gives us a perfect idea of the language and manners of his dramatis personæ; of the violence and impatience of Madame de Mazarin with all her associates when she lost,

and of the tone of Mrs. Middleton's conversation, which is that of a silly beauty, eager to know the opinion of others on the comparative charms of her rivals. The whole is given in the lively dramatic style of St. Evremond, and marks the phrases peculiar to the diction of his personages, although in a language which was not his own. Madame de Mazarin, impatient at the ill luck she had shared with Mrs. Middleton, is angry at the English instead of French that she hears talking about her.

MADAME DE MAZARIN.

Votre démangeaison de parler est terrible,
Et gagner avec vous, n'est pas chose possible.

MRS. MIDDLETON.

Je ne puis dire un mot, sans la mettre en courroux :
O Lord! Mr. Villiers — *O Lord!* que ferons nous?
Dites-nous qui des deux vous semble la plus belle,
De Mesdames Grafton et Litchfield — laquelle?

MR. VILLIERS.

Commencez; dites-nous, Madame Middleton,
Votre vrai sentiment sur Madame Grafton. (1)

MRS. MIDDLETON.

De deux doigts seulement faites-la moi plus grande,
Il faut qu'à sa beauté toute beauté se rende.

MR. VILLIERS.

L'autre n'a pas besoin de cette faveur-là.

(1) Lady Isabella Bennet, the same whose early marriage is recorded in the foregoing pages.

MRS. MIDDLETON.

Elle est grande, elle est droite.

MR. VILLIERS.

Après cela,

MRS. MIDDLETON.

Madame Litchfield un peu plus animée,
De tout ceux qu'elle voit, se verroit fort aimée.

MR. VILLIERS.

Vous ne me parlez pas de Madame Kildare.

MRS. MIDDLETON.

I never saw personne avoir un meilleur air.

MR. VILLIERS.

Votre Mistress Masson, autrefois si pronée,
Me semble maintenant assez abandonnée;
Je ne vous entends plus parler de ses appas?

MRS. MIDDLETON.

Monsieur Villiers, *indeed*, elle n'en manque pas;
Je ne l'ai jamais crûe une beauté parfaite.
Mais allons voir un peu, comment va la Bassette.

MADAME DE MAZARIN.

Vos beaux discours d'appas, de grâce, de beauté,
Nous coutent notre argent; il ne m'est rien resté.
Cherchez d'autres moitiés, (1) comme d'autres oreilles,
Pour petarder l'Anglois sur toutes vos merveilles.
Et vous, Mr. Villiers, garder pour d'autres gens,
D'honneur et *de raison*, vos rares sentimens.

MRS. MIDDLETON.

Je ne vous croyois pas tout-à-fait si colere;
Un discours de beauté, ne doit pas vous déplaire.
Qui, tant que vous, Madame, a de part aux attraits?

MADAME DE MAZARIN.

Si je le crois, du moins, je n'en parle jamais.

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(1) Going halves at play.

MRS. MIDDLETON.

Nous n'avons pas appris à garder le silence,
Comme vous avez fait en vos couvens de France.
Monsieur, Monsieur Villiers, allons nous consoler;
Il est d'autres maisons, où l'on pourra parler.

MADAME DE MAZARIN.

Enseignez-moi, Madame, enseignez-moi l'école,
Où je pourrois apprendre à discourir sur rien.
Et passer sans sujet, de parole en parole,
A ce mérite usé, d'un aimable entretien. (1)

These assemblies, and the entertainments given by the royal family, where play always formed a part of the amusement, seem for many years after the Restoration to have been the chief resource in polished society of those persons, who from taste, habits of life, or long residence abroad, found the indigenous pleasures of cock-fighting, bowling, and horse-racing insufficient for their amusement, and the drinking then inseparable from them incompatible with their health. Thus during the whole reign of Charles the Second, we find all those who had adopted play as an amusement, living much in the society of the many foreigners who now visited or were domiciliated in London. The talliers at Bassette were almost always foreigners, and few or none of those who made gaming their profession or their means of living were English.

(1) See St. Evremond, vol. v. p. 92.

Great sums were already lost and won in these societies. Lady Sunderland mentions more than once the ill luck of Lord Cavendish (1) at Madame de Mazarin's, and the high play which took place at Court, in her letters to Lord Halifax.

" My Lord Cavendish had taken up mony at " fiftye and threescore pounde in a hundred, to " go into France, and he lost a thousand in " tow nights at Madam Mazarins, that stops " his journey for a time. * * * * * My Lord " Thanet is one of the pretenders to be Cham- " berlaine to the Queen, and makes his court " in sitting on of the bed chamber women " playing his money with her Ma^tie at Anter- " lew (2) : — the King, Queene, Duchesse of " Portsmouth and my L^d Feathersham made a " banke of 2000*l.*, and they won 2700*l.* of the " Frenchmen."

August 20th, 1680.

" My Lord Cavendish's journey is stop'd awhile; " he has not only lost all his mony, but coach- " horses and plate, all he had: my L^d Clifford " says, he expects his pictures and house will " be gone next."

From this society, which of course must have been very limited in its numbers, cards, under

(1) The first Duke of Devonshire. (2) Loo.

the modified and more sober forms of Ombre and Quadrille, became by degrees the amusement of women of all ranks in their social meetings, and one which their neglected education, and their want of general subjects of conversation, made necessary. Still we can form no very lively idea of the private life of the respectable part of the community at this period. The gay but profligate pages of Comte Hamilton describe nothing but Whitehall.

Were we disposed to adopt the representation given of the manners and the morals of the city in the comedies of the day, we should have an equally bad opinion of both; but fortunately we know that the vices and follies of the upper orders of society, in a great metropolis, have no extensive influence on the mass of the population of their fellow-citizens, far less on that of their country at large; that such excesses,

> "To men remote from power but rarely known,
> Leave reason, faith, and conscience all their own."
>
> GOLDSMITH's *Traveller*.

Even in those disastrous periods which crowd the pages of history with the recital of tumult, war, revolution, and all the horrors in their train; while private memoirs teem with fright-

ful instances of individual depravity and suffering, thousands of inoffensive beings, whose situation no modes of society can much affect, nor any political events habitually benefit, are struggling to pursue their usual course of necessary labour and industry, in spite of the moral storms around them. These moral storms, like the great commotions of nature, end by falling as heavily on the cottage as on the palace: finding in the cottage less to destroy, the work of mischief soon attacks such necessary and vital means of subsistence, that the poorest peasant in the land is obliged to abandon his labour, and lend his arm to support pretensions by which he can never profit, and confirm power in which he will never participate. It is the more or less fixity and inaptness to excitement in this order of people, which will be found to be the measure of the more or less evil occasioned by such tempestuous periods in the civil history of man.

A striking instance will hereafter occur in comparing the conduct of the population of London, even under the strong influence of religious fanaticism, with that of Paris, during the first twelve years of the French Revolution.

CHAPTER III.

FRENCH MEMOIRS AND PRIVATE CORRESPONDENCE, THEIR ADVANTAGES OVER OUR EARLY CHRONICLES.—STATE OF SOCIETY IN FRANCE DURING THE REGENCY OF ANNE OF AUSTRIA.—CHARACTER OF HER COURT.—MADAME DE CHEVREUSE.—MADEMOISELLE DE HAUTEFORT.—MADEMOISELLE DE LA FAYETTE.—CARDINAL MAZARIN.—CONTRAST BETWEEN THE MOTIVES AND CONDUCT OF THE CONTEMPORARY CIVIL WARS OF FRANCE AND ENGLAND.—THE FRONDE, AND ITS EFFECTS ON THE SOCIAL LIFE AND MANNERS OF FRANCE.—THE DUCHESSE DE LONGUEVILLE.

In examining the state of society in France, we have much to assist our enquiries, which is absolutely wanting to similar researches in our own country. At a period long anterior to that of which we are speaking, the French already possessed a series of biographical history written by individuals who, while relating the public events in which they were themselves actors or spectators, dwell often with much detail and complacency on their own particular history and adventures. The earliest French memoirs possess this essential advantage over our old chronicles, that in the latter, the author is never produced, and consequently his narrative loses

all the liveliness of individual recital, and much of the identification which takes place between an eye-witness and his auditor. So entirely indeed do time and distance hallow and render interesting minute details, that, after a certain period, history becomes more or less valuable, as it presents more or less lively pictures, not only of events, but of their effects on the minds and manners of contemporaries. It is this principle of curiosity inherent in our nature, which has in all times given such peculiar value to private letters. It is this which makes those of Cicero to Atticus the most interesting, and, perhaps, the most curious book which has come down to us from antiquity. How much more valuable, how infinitely more instructive, would have been the commentary of Cæsar on his conquests, had his comprehensive mind entered into more frequent details respecting himself and respecting the nations desolated by his arms, or had any of his letters explanatory of his own views, conduct, or feelings been preserved to us! Had he not abstained from every thing but a mere detail of his warfare and its results, we should have long ago estimated more highly and more justly the vast advances that have since been made under the mild system of Christianity, not only in political knowledge, but in every thing that regards the general interests

of humanity. We should have been more forcibly struck with seeing one of the most powerful intellects that ever adorned human nature so enslaved by the ignorance and the prejudices of his age, that his wars were those of extermination, and that even his splendid abilities, unassisted by a purer and more intellectual system of moral truth, allowed him not to imagine a better use of conquest than to destroy.

The French possess several collections of letters which form valuable and interesting commentaries on the general histories and the individual memoirs of the same date. The studied phrases, forced compliments, and long-winded circumlocutions of Voiture and of Mademoiselle Scuderi, no less than the incomparable ease and natural wit of Madame de Sevigné, convey much to the accurate observer of human nature and of the world, which their writers never intended to communicate. The same may be observed of many of the memoirs of those times. The accuracy of their statement of facts, although by no means to be depended on when relating their *own* history, may be safely trusted when accidentally mentioning circumstances unconnected either with their interest, their fame, or their vanity.

Thus, when Gourville tells us, that the Maré-

chal d'Humières, at the siege of Arras in 1654, was the first person who in actual warfare was served on plate, "et qui s'étoit avisé de donner de l'entremets, et un fruit régulier;" and that Turenne, while commanding in chief at the same siege, "n'avoit que de la vaisselle de fer-blanc, "avec une grande table servie de toutes sortes "de grosses viandes en grande abondance (1);" we cannot doubt the immense strides made by luxury in the expences of an army and of a military life, between the time above mentioned, and the command of Maréchal d'Estrés in 1710, when we learn from Grimm, who was one of the *twenty-eight* private secretaries accompanying head-quarters, that when the heavy baggage of the army was left behind, "*Le nécessaire* "*le plus indispensable*" took three hours to defile at every march. (2)

In fact, the whole tone of society in France, anterior to the majority of Louis the Fourteenth (as has been before observed), more resembled the times that preceded than those that followed it.

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(1) "Il y avoit plus de vingt officiers à cette table, et quelques autres petites tables servies de jambons, de langues de bœuf, de cervelats, et du vin en quantité."— *Mémoires de Gourville*, tom. i. p. 155.

(2) Lettres de Madame d'Epinay, tom. iii. p. 13.

The sombre jealousy of Louis the Thirteenth, the romantic gallantries of Anne of Austria, the fashion of single combats, the journey of Louis the Fourteenth to the frontiers of Spain to meet his intended bride, and the formalities of his marriage, — all bear the character of the antecedent age much more than that of the same country at the end of his reign.

On the accession of Anne of Austria to the regency, her weak but decent character, the regularity of her life, her exactness in the performance of all her religious duties, and in the observance of all the decorums of her "high office," maintained in her court the appearance of much order, dignity, and regularity of conduct.

The Duchess de Chevreuse, the friend and favourite of her early youth, who had shared her unmerited sufferings, when recalled on the death of Louis the Thirteenth from the banishment in which the vindictive Richelieu had detained her, found no longer in the Queen the same similarity of tastes, pursuits, or amusements, which had involved them in the same suspicions, and united them in the same persecution.

The sovereign was become more serious and more devout, while the favourite had retained

the same love of admiration and intrigue which had served to amuse her exile, and by which she hoped again to secure her empire over the Queen. But the Queen, like all weak characters in possession of power, dreading the idea of being governed or directed by others, shook off her old favourite, and after a short time neglected all those who from their support during her adversity considered themselves as having peculiar rights to her favour. These claims they were not backward in asserting, while she, by way of securing her independence, threw herself entirely into the power of Cardinal Mazarin, like Gribouille who, according to the proverb, "se jettoit dans l'eau, de peur de la pluie."

Of Mazarin's first introduction to Richelieu, of the beginning of his favour with that minister, and of his rise to power in France, a learned friend of the author's, at Rome, lately found in that city a detailed MS. account nearly contemporary with the transaction. It differs little from that given by Le Vassor, in his history of Louis the Thirteenth, except in not mentioning that Mazarin was sent by the papal government as the conciliatory messenger to Paris. The Pope, afterwards (according to Le Vassor), seems to have been very unwilling to make him a cardinal, probably from thinking him too much

attached to the interests of France. In the year 1640, during the pontificate of Urban the Eighth (Barberini), a positive prohibition of all public gaming in Rome had been issued by the government, and complied with, even within the precincts of the habitations of the foreign ministers. An unwarrantable contempt of this prohibition obliged the papal government to condemn to the gallies a certain Bianconi (a subject of the Pope), who, under the immediate protection of the Marechal d'Estrées, then the French ambassador, continued to hold a public rendezvous for games of hazard, which had before been held by M. Rouvray, the ambassador's chevalier d'honneur, or secretary. (1)

Bianconi, having been seized in open contravention of the law, was imprisoned, tried, and condemned for ten years to the gallies. On his way to embarkation, when already attached to the chain of delinquents, he was forcibly released by this secretary of the ambassador, assisted by others of his servants, carried off in public defiance of justice, and conveyed away to Naples. Not content with this affront, committed by his own servants, to the court and

(1) This circumstance is mentioned in the notes to Dangeau's Memoirs, but without any reference to Mazarin.

country to which he was accredited, the ambassador never went out on any public occasion without this obnoxious secretary in his carriage, or by his side, and would not consent to his withdrawing himself from Rome, which the unfortunate individual was anxious to have done, aware of the predicament in which he stood, aware that he had been condemned by contumacy, and a price put on his head. This conduct of the ambassador so incensed Cardinal Francesco Barberini, the Pope's nephew, and secretary of state, that, by his order, the offending person received the contents of four carbines in his body, while he was himself in the act of shooting, at a villa of the ambassador's, near Rome. A formal recognition took place, of the person of the delinquent, by the officers of justice; and the body was delivered to the public executioner, who, after cutting off the head at the Ponte St. Angelo, where all capital punishments were performed, presented it three times to the surrounding multitude, as that of the condemned secretary of the French ambassador; thus openly bidding defiance to any claim of diplomatic immunities securing from the punishment of offences committed within the jurisdiction of the papal government. As soon as these circumstances were known at Paris, the Maréchal

d'Estrées received an order immediately to quit Rome. Louis the Thirteenth and Richelieu threatened, and the Pope and his nephew trembled. An extraordinary nuncio was immediately directed to repair to Paris, to detail the flagrant conduct both of the ambassador and his secretary, and to justify the extremities to which it had led. Mazarin, hardly twenty years old, while yet prosecuting the study of the law, at the university of Alcala, had already made himself remarkable, by a successful defence of his father, then under trial for a homicide at Rome. On this occasion he had hurried from Spain to his assistance, and had left an impression of such ability, and such talents, in the whole conduct of this affair, as seemed peculiarly to recommend his being chosen for the conciliatory messenger to Paris. Here his agreeable manners, and supple, accommodating character, so ingratiated him with the despot Richelieu, and his sombre melancholy master, that he succeeded completely in the object of his mission, and justified the Pope's conduct, in support of his own offended laws. The French ambassador was ordered to return to his functions at Rome, and no farther notice to be taken of the business. Mazarin, meanwhile, had so recommended himself to the favour of Cardinal Richelieu, that he secured for

him the nomination of France for a cardinal's hat the following year, 1641, and within two years after (1) he succeeded to the power of his protector, over the sickly and subdued mind of Louis the Thirteenth.

The confusion and bustle of the Fronde seem to have introduced great licence in the manners and morals of the upper order of society in France, into the conduct of the women, and into the general tone of social life. Madame de Motteville, indeed, already complains, in 1646, while all was yet quiet, of the altered manners of the young men, — that they could not bear the politeness and civility of the old Maréchal de Bassompierre, the fine gentleman of the court of Henry the Fourth, and censured as a crime his professed desire of pleasing, and his love of showy magnificence. He, who had been the admired of a court, where attention and respect to women

(1) Le Vassor gives this as a reason for Richelieu's determination to make Mazarin a cardinal. He says, "Le "Cardinal n'osant se promettre une longue vie, projettat "d'avoir pour successeur dans le ministère un étranger "qu'une juste reconnoissance obligeroit à soutenir la maison "et les creatures de son bienfaiteur, et qui s'y preteroit "d'autant plus volontiers, qu'il n'auroit ni parens ni re-"lations dans le royaume."—*Le Vassor, Histoire de Louis Treize*, tom. ix. p. 183.

was general, continued the same manners in a court, where, on the contrary, the men were almost ashamed of shewing them any civility, and where unbounded ambition and avarice were the only striking qualities of the most distinguished persons of the day. (1) Bassompierre's attentions to women had certainly, by his own account, been very successful. When Mary of Medicis was arrested by order of her son, Louis the Thirteenth, at Compeigne, February, 1631, Bassompierre expected to be immediately imprisoned on the return of the King to Paris. On this occasion he tells us in his Memoirs, "Le lendemain, Lundi, 24 Fevrier, je me levay "devant le jour, et brulay plus de *six milles* "*lettres d'amour* que j'avois autrefois receües de "diverses femmes, apprehendant que si on me "prenoit prisonnier, on me vinct chercher dans "ma maison, et qu'on y trouvait quelque chose "qui pust nuire, étant les seuls papiers que "j'avois qui eussent pu nuire à quelqu'un." *Journal de ma Vie*, vol. ii. p. 650.

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(1) See M. de Motteville, vol. i. p. 386. St. Evremond gives a very different account of these times in his "*Stances sur les premières Années de la Regence*," addressed to Ninon de l'Enclos. See St. Evremond, tom. iii. p. 145.

The war of the Fronde, and its consequences, procured for the women, if not the respect of the men, at least a more than wholesome influence on their affairs, and appears to have operated very materially on their future social relations. After the restoration of tranquillity by the establishment of Cardinal Mazarin in undisputed power, his artful, unprincipled character was systematically indulgent to all pretensions, all malversations, and all misconduct which did not interfere with his own. The perfect indifference he manifested to virtue and vice, and the baseness of which he set the example both to his enemies and friends, did more, during his long administration, to lower the tone of national feeling in France than had ever been effected by all the imprisonments, exiles, and executions of the despotic and implacable Richelieu.

From this time we hear no more of romantic amours like those of Louis the Thirteenth and Mademoiselle de la Fayette, who took a bond of security in the veil against her own possible frailty, and against the passion and scruples of her royal lover. The melancholy and subdued mind of Louis the Thirteenth had found in Mademoiselle de la Fayette a faithful, tender, and attached friend,—the only one to whom he dared confide his sufferings from the thraldom

in which he allowed himself to be held by Richelieu. This despotic minister, who had contrived to make his sovereign the first of his slaves, allowed nobody to approach him, but such as he had engaged to report to him every complaint made by the King against himself, while he practised on the King's weakness, so as to induce him often to betray the language of those to whom he had opened himself. But Mademoiselle de la Fayette not only boldly refused all communication with the Cardinal, but in her frequent interviews with the King encouraged his aversion to his tyrant minister, and exhorted him to shake off an authority which dishonoured him in the eyes of his people. Secure in the purity of her conduct, of her sentiments, and of her intentions, Mademoiselle de la Fayette openly avowed her attachment to the King, and even a censorious court believed it compatible with her honour. It is said that Cardinal Richelieu, dreading the increasing influence of a character on which he could gain nothing, addressed himself to her confessor and to the confessor of the King, to inspire their penitents mutually with scruples respecting their intercourse. Mademoiselle de la Fayette, it would seem, had always intended ending her life in a convent, and her resolution was hurried by her royal lover, who, aware of

this intention, and dreading thus to lose her, at last, in spite of all her scruples and all his own, pressed her to accept of an establishment at Versailles, and to attach herself entirely to him in a more earthly manner. Her severe principles were startled at this dereliction of the King's. It proved to her, that she herself might not always resist, and hastened her resolution to quit the court (where she belonged to the Queen's household), and retire to a convent. To this measure the King's consent seems to have been obtained, merely from the religious scruple of not daring to dispute so pure a soul with heaven. After a long conversation with her at the Queen's drawing-room, he publicly shed tears at taking leave of her; and although she is reported on this occasion to have allowed no alteration to take place in her countenance, the merit of her sacrifice was not lessened by insensibility. For when, retired to her own apartments, she flew to her windows to watch (for the last time) the King stepping into his carriage, and exclaimed, "Hélas, donc! je ne le "verrai plus:" she proved, that not coldness, but the religion of those days, and the strong hold it took on virtuous as well as weak minds, alone parted them. The long visits the King continued to make to her convent in a distant

quarter of Paris (1) shewed his unaltered sentiments. It was, to these visits, and the advice he received at them, that his more kind treatment of Anne of Austria, and their living on better terms, is attributed.

From Mademoiselle d'Hautefort, another of the Queen's ladies to whom he had before marked his admiration, he had experienced nothing but slights. He even suspected her of communicating his addresses to the Queen, and making light of them. She is described as handsome, gay, and captivating, with rigid principles, determined opinions, little tenderness of nature, and much disposition to satire. Even for such a mistress, who rejected his homage, he had conscientious scruples as to the nature of his sentiments, though his want of resolution allowed her to remain at court. To the Queen she became a steady, disinterested, unshaken friend, who risked her life, and suffered exile in defending her from the vindictive jealousy of Richelieu. One of the first acts of the Queen's government was recalling to her court all those who had been banished for their attachment to her interests. To Mademoiselle d'Hautefort she sent her own litter (a conveyance we should not now

(1) Les filles de Sainte Marie de la Rue St. Antoine.

resort to for speed), and wrote to her to hurry her return in the tenderest and most flattering manner, assuring her that she could enjoy no real happiness till shared with her. Yet too soon afterwards this faithful friend incurred honourable disgrace for having endeavoured, with all the frankness and sincerity of real attachment in a strong mind, to open the Queen's eyes to the evils impending on her dawning reign from the undue authority she was allowing a false and artful minister to derive from her.

But Anne of Austria was not exempted from the sad necessity which has always outlawed princes from the common benefits of friendship. She, therefore, banished her incorruptible attendant (1), and armed her minister with the power, as well as the will, to allow no such independent minds to approach her intimacy in future.

Although Richelieu had succeeded by confiscation, by purchase, *per fas et nefas*, to emancipate the crown from the tyranny of some

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(1) See Madame de Motteville, vol. i. p. 203.

Mademoiselle d'Hautefort afterwards married the Maréchal Duc de Schomberg (a Protestant), and was the mother of the Duke of Schomberg, killed at the battle of the Boyne. She had a sister called Mademoiselle d'Escars, who died unmarried in the year 1706, at the extraordinary age of 102 years.

of its most troublesome vassals, still the government-in-chief of provinces, and the great military commands, gave a power and an authority to their possessors very incompatible with that anomaly in human reason — an absolute monarchy: — the Prince de Condé, governor-in-chief of the provinces of Guyenne and of Brittany, the Duc de Longueville, hereditary constable and governor of Normandy, the Duchess d'Aiguillon retaining the fortress of Havre de Grace, left her by her uncle Cardinal Richelieu, and many other similar endowments; — all became points of re-union and of security against the orders or the displeasure of the court, which rendered their possessors, in fact, very independent of it. But this security and independence was merely personal, unparticipated by any body of people, or any order of the state. On the individuals armed with this delegated authority it only conferred the right of inflicting every thing allowed in the hierarchy of power more immediately on those committed to their government.

The difference of national character is perhaps nowhere more strongly marked than in the motives and conduct of the contemporary civil wars of France and England. The Fronde was directed entirely against individual character, —

our Rebellion against principles of government. Both may be said to have failed in their object, the one by the establishment in power of Cardinal Mazarin, the other by the Restoration of Charles the Second. But the war against principles had served to develope the human mind, and to throw light on the real end and only true means of government. The war against individual character had debased the mind, and given expansion, only, to private pique and hatred. It took away all dignity of motive, and all shame of abandoning or supporting leaders, except as they rose or fell with the wheel of fortune. The parliament of Paris, after having put a price on the head of Mazarin in 1653, publicly harangued him as the saviour of the state in 1660, without any other change in circumstances than his having established his authority. By this conduct they lost the power ever to do more than make useless remonstrances against measures, which they had neither the right to oppose, nor the virtue to control.

But the parliament of England, which had defended five of its members from the King himself in person, when coming to seek their punishment in 1642, preserved and developed within it the seeds of that power, which, in 1676, voted the exclusion of the only brother of the

reigning king from the succession to the throne, and in 1688, spoke the voice of the nation in declaring that brother for ever an alien to that throne, of which he had proved himself unworthy.

Nor is the difference of the two national characters less remarkable in the conduct, than in the motive of their civil commotions.

The reluctance with which in England both parties resorted to arms; the length and patience of the discussions, in which one side claimed, and the other allowed, rights, at that time unheard of in the other governments of Europe, contrasts remarkably with the unfortunate precipitancy with which, 150 years afterwards, the Declaration of Rights was made and enforced in France at the beginning of her Revolution. The same reluctance is observable in the appeal at last made by England to the "*ratio ultima*" of nations, as well as of princes, and the same precipitancy in the whole conduct of the Fronde. The facility with which the leaders on either side raised armies to support pretensions, or avenge wrongs, in which those armies had neither interest nor participation, marks the unaltered mobility of the national character, its love of military enterprise, and of the bustle and business of military glory.

With us, the troops were enlisted, not as the

followers of such or such a leader, but called on to defend by arms, in the last resort, a solemn league and covenant between the governors and the governed, which they had all individually sworn to observe and to maintain. The few followers who surrounded the standard of the unfortunate monarch, when first erected against such opponents, proved how entirely a conviction of the identity of their *own* rights, with those they were called on to assert, was necessary to bring them into action.

The great Condé, and the still greater Turenne, while enlisting troops, throwing themselves into fortresses, and making treaties with Spain, to expel a powerful minister, the moment he opposed their individual pretensions, appear to the unprejudiced eyes of posterity merely employing a morbid activity to get possession of power, which they knew no more than their opponent how to use. All idea of bettering the condition of the country was alike out of the question on either side. Nor were these leading personages, in fact, better informed of their real interest, and real duties, or less vulgarly ignorant of every principle of civil liberty, on which they supposed themselves acting, than the lowest follower of their camp.

The female characters which these times pro-

duced offer a still more striking contrast to their English contemporaries. Cardinal de Retz and Cromwell (however dissimilar) may still be said to resemble each other more than the Duchesse de Longueville and Mrs. Hutchinson. At the peace of the Pyrenees, Mazarin told the Spanish minister Don Louis de Haro, who was stipulating for the return of Madame de Longueville as well as of her brother the Grand Condé to court — "Vous autres Espagnols, vous parlez "fort à votre aise ; vos femmes ne se mêlent que "de faire l'amour ; mais en France, ce n'est pas "de même, et nous en avons trois, qui seroient "capables de gouverner ou de bouleverser trois "grands royaumes — la Duchesse de Longueville, "la Princess Palatine, et la Duchesse de Che-"vreuse." It may be doubted if their political abilities were not much over-rated by the crafty cardinal. Their influence, however, and that of their associates, on the future character and social existence of their sex in France was permanent, and remained in almost undiminished, although less apparent force, until swept into the gulf of the Revolution.

Cardinal de Retz has said of the Duchesse de Longueville, that "de l'héroïne d'un grand parti "elle en devint l'aventurière." Some degree of personal pique may be suspected to have pointed the

antithesis of this sentence; but the contrast that he remarks between the languor of her manner and the activity of her mind, is confirmed by all contemporary accounts. Madame de Motteville is an unwilling and indisputable witness to the power of her charms, and their effect on all around her (1), a part of which must probably have arisen from that unlooked-for contrast between the character of her beauty and that of her mind noticed by de Retz. Under a complexion of lilies and roses, blue eyes, and a quantity of fair hair, accompanied by a languid, indolent manner, was unexpectedly found the mind of a heroine of romance, who was the witness, as well as the cause, of single combats in defence of her honour;

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(1) " Elle avoit la taille admirable, et l'air de sa per-
" sonne avoit un agrément dont le pouvoir s'étendoit même
" sur notre sex. Il étoit impossible de la voir sans l'aimer,
" et sans désirer de lui plaire. Sa beauté néanmoins con-
" sistoit plus dans les couleurs de son visage, que dans la
" perfection de ses traits. Ses yeux n'étoient pas grands,
" mais beaux, doux, et brillants, le bleu en étoit admirable,
" il étoit pareil à celui des turquoises. Les poëtes ne pou-
" voient jamais comparer aux lys et aux roses, le blanc et
" l'incarnat qu'on voyoit sur son visage, et ses cheveux
" blonds et argentés, et qui accompagnoient tant de choses
" merveilleuses, faisoit qu'elle ressembloit beaucoup plus à
" un ange, tel que la faiblesse de notre nature nous les fait
" imaginer, qu'à une femme." — *Madame de Motteville*, tom. ii. p. 16.

who incited to deeds of arms, and who traversed hostile countries to rejoin her lover, or to bring succour to her friend.

An extraordinary combination of circumstances gave Madame de Longueville that influence over her contemporaries, which she undoubtedly possessed: it has elevated her name into almost historical celebrity; while her character, notwithstanding her endowments, remains rather as a beacon than an example to her sex.

She was the daughter of that Prince de Condé for whom Henry the Fourth had nearly sullied the lustre of his patriotic reign, by undertaking a war against Spain merely for the purpose of forcing back a young princess of 16 years old from the retreat in which a prudent husband had accompanied her, to avoid the importunities of her royal admirer. Such a passion at 56, could not hope to obtain either the success or the indulgence shown to his earlier amours. The public perfectly understood the absence of the Prince and Princess of Condé(1),

(1) The Prince of Condé was at that time first prince of the blood, and, after Gaston Duc d'Orléans, in immediate succession to the throne. He was known, therefore, by the appellation of *Monsieur le Prince*, and his wife, even after her family no longer stood in the same relation to the crown, by that of *Madame la Princesse*.

and approved their conduct. Such, indeed, was their popularity at their return from Bruxelles to Paris, on the death of Henry the Fourth, that Mary of Medicis, at the outset of her regency, judged it expedient (for all pretence of either justice or law was out of the question) to send the Prince to the Bastille. From the Bastille, after some weeks, he was removed to Vincennes, where he remained two years, where his wife was allowed to join him, and where the Duchesse de Longueville was born in 1619. Her marriage with the Duc de Longueville, a Prince of the Orleans branch of the blood royal, in 1642, seems to have been settled by her father only because, at the age of twenty-three, no other French prince had sought to obtain her hand. Mademoiselle de Montpensier, her relation and contemporary, in her Mémoires, pities her for this union more than she seems to have pitied herself: she says, "Mr. de Longueville fut pour elle "une cruelle destinée; il étoit vieux, elle étoit "fort jeune, et belle comme un ange. Cette "fâcheuse disproportion n'empêcha pas qu'elle "ne s'accommodât à ce parti de très bonne grâce, "ce que je remarquai fort bien à ses françailles "où je fus priée."(1)

(1) Mémoires de Montpensier, tom. i. p. 59.

This union took place only the year before her brother, the grand Condé, yet under the title of Duc d'Enghien, had obtained the victory of Rocroi. The triumph of this heaven-born captain — for so we must call a prince of the blood commanding in chief at twenty-two!—cast a lustre both on himself and his family, which neither he nor they seem to have borne with moderation. Their pretensions became unlimited, their demands exorbitant, and the political situation of the country favoured both.

A victory gained three days after the death of a sovereign, whose authority devolved on an infant under the guardianship of an unexperienced mother, was a service likely to be exaggerated by all parties. In this instance the charms of the sister combined with the valour of the brother to bestow on them both that omnipotence which fashion only had the power of conferring in France, above, and in spite of every other species of despotism. (1)

Within a year after the marriage of the

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(1) The name of *Petit Maitre*, which has remained in the language, it is known, was first given to the airs of importance and superiority assumed by the friends and society of the Grand Condé. It had succeeded to that of *les Importans*, of which the Duc de Beaufort had been the leader.

Duchesse de Longueville, a supposed doubt thrown on the purity of her character by a letter dropped in the society of a rival beauty, Madame de Monbazon, was considered as the sufficient and necessary cause of a duel in defence of that honour which she afterwards so often risked. This duel, which took place in the Place Royale in the centre of Paris, at noonday, and which must have resembled the encounter of two of Ariosto's Paladins, ended in the death of her champion, the Comte de Coligny. The fair object was said to have been a spectatress of the combat from a window in the square. This circumstance, whether true or false, and the whole of the transaction, is an additional proof of the remarkable change of manners which took place during the ensuing reign of Louis the Fourteenth. Madame de Longueville soon after accompanied her husband to Munster, whither he was sent as ambassador on the part of France to treat of peace. From thence she made a tour into Holland and Germany, and only returned to Paris in the year 1647. Such was the éclat with which she re-appeared, such the honours with which she was received by Anne of Austria, and such her own distinguished rank in society, that neither reason nor apology seems to have been left her for fomenting discontents against

the court, and inciting her husband and her brothers to separate their interests from it. The Hôtel de Longueville and the Hôtel de Condé were more crowded and more frequented courts than either the Luxembourg, inhabited by the Duke of Orleans, or the Palais Royale, by the King and Queen-mother. "On eut dit," says her biographer, "qu'elle étoit jalouse d'elle-même, "tant elle avoit envie d'enchérir toujours sur le "grand crédit dont elle jouissoit." The desire to act a more distinguished part than was compatible with peaceable times, and to acquire the facility of yielding to sentiments of which those times would not have permitted the indulgence, could alone have dictated her conduct. It leaves very problematical the assertion of Cardinal de Retz, "que si le Prieur des Chartreux l'avoit "plu, elle auroit été solitaire de bonne foi."

A difference in opinion on the merits of two sonnets seems at this time to have had no inconsiderable effect in increasing the animosity against the court, and animating the fashionable opposition to its taste as well as to its measures. The verses of Benserade being protected and admired by the Queen and her adherents, Madame de Longueville and her society declared for those of Voiture.

Of this society, the power of its decrees, and

all that its approbation gave or withheld, Madame de Motteville has left us an entertaining picture. Of the particular tone of its conversation she says, "La fine raillerie dont elle "(Madame de Longueville), et ses courtisans "faisoient profession, tomboit souvent sur ceux "qui, en lui voulant rendre leurs devoirs, sen-"toient à leur dommage, que l'honnête sincerité, "qui se doit observer dans la société civile, "étoit apparemment bannie de la sienne." It is impossible here not to recognize the beginning of that habit of *persiflage*, which so long constituted one of the most admired talents in French society; which in later times, under the vulgar form and name of *quizzing*, spread into a neighbouring country, and which is yet by no means banished as entirely as it deserves from the social intercourse of either.

A weak and indolent queen, governed by a mean, artful, and avaricious minister; opposed by magistrates, who assumed rights, to which accidental circumstances gave them their only claim; both parties alternately supported and abandoned by a factious nobility, who on either side only sought their own personal distinction; such were the ignoble causes, which for more than five years involved France in that scene of turbulence and confusion, of inconsiderate

severity and disgraceful concessions, from which none of the principal actors retired with honour; which, after much unnecessary bloodshed and unprovoked cruelties, ended without leaving a trace of its existence, either on the institutions, the government, or the laws of the country.

During these five years, we find Madame de Longueville sometimes enthroned at the Hôtel de Ville at Paris, surrounded by a crowd of adorers, with generals and statesmen receiving her orders, and seeking her counsel, the oracle of her family, and the idol of her party. Sometimes proudly submitting to the court, sometimes flying into exile before its forces. Alternately the ally and the opponent of her brother, the grand Condé, and always for equally futile reasons. Her name sometimes associated with that of Turenne, in the least commendable part of his illustrious career; and sometimes disgraced by receiving money from the enemies of her country to support her in plans of opposition to it. At last, "not leaving faction, but by "it being left," we find her shut up in Bourdeaux, with all the remaining Frondeurs, who were split into as many factions as there were generals, and herself heartily weary of a provincial and almost besieged town, where she no longer commanded. Here, on the approach of

the court, all the faithful followers of these disinterested leaders united in abandoning their cause, and insisting on making their peace with the King. The Duke de Vêndome took possession of Bourdeaux in the King's name, and the Fronde ended, leaving every thing for which they had been cutting one another's throats exactly where they found it, except the power of Cardinal Mazarin, which was confirmed and augmented by their opposition.

With the Fronde ended the brilliant part of the Duchesse de Longueville's career. Her beauty was on the wane, her admirer the Duc de la Rochefoucauld no longer the slave of her charms, no longer inclined "pour plaire à ses "beaux yeux," to make war either against the gods or the King. Disgusted by her inconstancy in sentiments more appropriate to her sex than those of ambition and politics, he not only abandoned her cause, but persuaded her brother no longer to be misguided by her advice.

The internal peace of the country being restored, her "occupation was gone," and to the court she was not allowed access. From Bourdeaux she was sent to Montreuil-Bellay, and from thence permitted to remove to Moulins, where the widow of her uncle, the beheaded Duc de Montmorency, had taken the veil, and

was then the superior of the convent; in whose church she had erected the admirable monument, which still exists, to the memory of her husband. Here the Duke de Longueville joined his wife. He seems, either from indifference or from real attachment, to have been a most forgiving husband (1). He had endeavoured in vain to negotiate her peace at court, where he had long made his own. He now opposed the intention in which he found her of becoming a Carmelite, and reprobated the rigour and excess of the penances she was inflicting on herself; for about this time her *conversion* (as it was called) began. Repentance and devotion were the only parts left her to act, and she assumed them with all the eagerness and intemperance which she had formerly employed on politics and gallantry. Bishops, priests, and nuns became now what the leaders of the Fronde and

(1) Cardinal de Retz says of him, " Monsieur de Lon-
" gueville avoit avec le beau nom d'Orléans, de la vivacité,
" de l'agrément, de la dépense, de la liberalité, de la jus-
" tice, de la valeur, de la grandeur, et il ne fut jamais qu'un
" homme médiocre, parce qu'il eut toujours des idées qui
" furent infiniment au dessus de sa capacité. Avec la ca-
" pacité, et les grands desseins, l'on n'est jamais compté
" pour rien, quand on ne les soutien pas, l'on n'est jamais
" compté pour beaucoup, et c'est ce qui fait le médiocre."
— *Mémoires de Retz*, liv. ii. p. 215.

the municipality of Paris had formerly been to her, and she to them. She took an active part in the affairs of the Jansenists, and against the persecution of the Port-Royal institutions; and having given up all temporal intrigues, her restless mind and love of sway took refuge in spiritual schisms and disputes. She was in direct correspondence with the Pope (1), and became the patroness of all the religious factions and oppositions of the day, while supposing herself wholly devoted to the interests of piety, and to the white-washing her own soul from its worldly stains. (2) Among the first and best fruits of her conversion and altered life, was a greater attention to the wishes and to the interests of her husband, from whom she no longer separated herself. From Moulins she accompanied him to his government of Normandy, where she was distinguished by her beneficence and charities, and where she remained till his death.

Of their two sons, the eldest had appeared in his mother's arms, when, as a hostage for the

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(1) Alexander the Seventh (Ottoboni).

(2) It was said of her, " Qu'elle eut le talent de faire " encore du bruit en faisant son salut, et de se sauver sur " la même planche de l'enfer et de l'ennui." — *Lettres de Madame de Sévigné*, Grouvelle's edit. tom. v. p. 142. in the notes.

sentiments of her family, she was presented to the populace of Paris, on the steps of the Hôtel de Ville, by the Cardinal de Retz. The second son was born soon after within its walls, and received the name of Charles *Paris*, from the magistrates of the city, who became his godfathers.

If, as was said, she had taken great pains with their education, it must have been ill directed. The eldest, the Comte de Dunois, from a sort of religious insanity, insisted on becoming a priest, took regular orders, and was known in the world only by the name of the Abbé d'Orléans. The derangement of his understanding afterwards taking a more decided and indubitable form, he was obliged to make a dotation of his estates and property to his brother, the Comte de St. Pol, who took the title of Duc de Longueville, and was killed by a cannon ball at the passage of the Rhine, in 1672, under the eye of his uncle, the Grand Condé. On the manner in which his mother received this intelligence, her biographer, a priest, (who writes with the intention of holding her up as a saint, and her conversion as an example to all the worldly,) dwells with much admiration. " Est-il mort sur le champ?" was her first question. On receiving no answer, she exclaimed, " Ah ! répondez-moi ; mon fils, mon

" cher enfant, n'a-t-il pas eu un seul moment? " Ah! mon Dieu! quel sacrifice!"—" Car, chez " elle," says her biographer, " la nature ne par- " loit qu'après la religion." Madame de Sévigné, after mentioning the same particulars, gives a more affecting, and probably much more faithful, picture of the scene. She adds a remark, worthy of her tender and affectionate character, on the circumstance of the Duc de la Rochefoucauld having likewise lost a son on the same occasion. Of these two persons, who, from having been long *more* than friends, had long become *more* than strangers, she says, " J'ai dans la tête, que " s'ils s'étoient rencontrés tous deux seuls dans " ces premiers momens, tous les autres sentimens, " auroient fait place à des cris et des larmes, que " l'on auroit doublés de bon cœur."(1)

In spite of Madame de Longueville's abstraction from all worldly affairs, we find her soon after engaged in a law-suit with her husband's daughter, the Duchesse de Nemours, for the possession of the principality of Neufchatel, claimed by the Duchesse de Nemours, on the death of her half-brother, the Duc de Longueville.

Several great theologians, it seems, took the

(1) Lettres de Madame de Sévigné, tom. iii. p. 150.

part of Madame de Longueville; but, says the author of her life, as "la jurisprudence et la "théologie ont différentes manières de raison-"ner," she would have lost her cause, had not the King (according to the laudable custom of those days) intervened, and, in opposition to the law, (which such intervention always supposes) ordered the possession to remain with the Duchesse de Longueville. By the impartial public, it would seem, that her character was still variously estimated, even in these her days of grace. An instance of her marvellous forbearance and Christian charity, cited by her biographer, is a much stronger proof of the strange, inconsistent licence of the times, than of any particular elevation in her sentiments. He tells us, that Bussy Rabutin, having unwarrantably abused the Grand Condé in some of his satirical writings, a gentleman of his household had determined to avenge his prince, by arming all the lower servants of the Hôtel de Condé, and murdering Bussy in the streets of Paris. Madame de Longueville (likewise abused by Bussy) being informed of the intention, went immediately and discovered it to her brother, beseeching him to save their enemy's life; to which request, says the author, the Prince *nobly* consented.

The remainder of the Duchesse de Longue-

ville's life was passed at Paris, in what were then called practices of devotion, between the two convents of Port-Royal des Champs, and the Carmelites of the Fauxbourg S. Jacques; her time occupied by the business which their affairs, pretensions, and persecutions gave her; and her conscience quieted by the penances she gave herself. These are reported to have been so severe, and so constant, that on one occasion, in pulling out her pocket-handkerchief, a girdle of iron dropped on the floor, which was picked up and restored to her by one of the company, before whom it fell; an accident of which she must have been too well aware of the effect to be perfectly free from the suspicion of having contrived it; while the company, perhaps, were too well acquainted with her character to have felt much for her self-inflicted sufferings. But this is only one of the many instances of that sort of conventional dupery, in moments of representation and effect, exhibited in French society, even to this day, with never-failing success. The severities of her life were, however, believed to have increased a disease of languor which now attacked her, and which, ending in fever, put a period to her existence at fifty-nine years of age. During her illness, she would see nobody but her brother, the Grand Condé; and died, surrounded by all the consolations which

the Roman Catholic religion offers to its true believers. Among the followers of her pompous funeral was remarked the Duc de la Rochefoucauld, himself destined not to survive her a twelvemonth. His character was now ripened by reason and by time; and having long enjoyed the sweets of repose, which he well knew how to employ, he must have looked back with wonder, if not regret, to all the petulant pretensions of their younger days.

CHAPTER IV.

MUCH PURITY OF CONDUCT AND EXCELLENCE OF FEMALE CHARACTER CONTEMPORARY WITH THE HEROINES OF THE FRONDE. — MADAME DE SEVIGNÉ. — MADEMOISELLE DE VIGEAN. — THE DUCHESSE DE NAVAILLES. — THE AMUSEMENTS OF SOCIETY IN ENGLAND AND IN FRANCE. — THE THEATRE. — COMPARISON OF THAT OF FRANCE WITH THAT OF ENGLAND.

THE character of Madame de Longueville has been dwelt on more at length from her appearing to be the prototype of all the other heroines of her time, who, with fewer endowments either of nature or fortune, acted less brilliant but not less mischievous or less indecorous parts. The memoirs of Mademoiselle de Montpensier of "*La Grande Mademoiselle,*" a designation which must have been so agreeable to her, that she might be suspected of having bestowed it on herself, are perhaps in a social light the most curious of their day; so accurately do they give the colour of the period they describe, and the measure of the pernicious and ridiculous influence of the women in all the most serious

affairs of the times. (1) Unaware of the complete ignorance she displays in every page of the first principles either of justice or moral feeling, she gives a curious and authentic detail of the opinions and the ideas then instilled into the minds of princes, as to their own conduct, and as to their relative situation with respect to the rest of their fellow-creatures.

The eagerness of the authoress to be doing something either *for* or *against* the court, is only to be distinguished from the same meddling disposition in her female contemporaries by her not having the instigation of a lover or the excitement of any passion but a vague ambition to make herself remarkable. Her intrigues to marry either Louis the Fourteenth as soon as he was of age, or the grand Condé as soon as his wife was dead, or Charles the Second as soon as he should have recovered his kingdom, or the

(1) When Gaston, Duke of Orleans, after a thousand fluctuations between the court and the Fronde, at last allowed his daughter to go to Orleans, and shut its gates on the King's troops; seeing her depart, he said, " Cette " chevalerie seroit bien ridiculé, si le bon sens de Mes- " dames de Fiesque, et de Frontenac ne la soutenoit." He afterwards addressed his letters to them, " à Mesdames " les Comtesses, Aides-de-Camps dans l'Armée de ma " Fille."

Emperor of Germany, although old enough to be her father, and no way inclined to the alliance, sufficiently prove the absence of any sentiment but that of ambition. The individual merit of the persons she seems to have weighed exactly according to the scale of their rank in the precedence of Europe. When at last all these schemes for sovereign power had failed, when no longer young, she found herself left, with no other interest or occupation in life than that arising from the rigid observance of the etiquettes which she exacted towards herself; from her often offended feelings on the distinctions of the *chaise à dos*, *fauteuils* and *plians* granted to others, and the self-important injustice with which she interfered in the little squabbles of her household; then nature seems to have reclaimed her rights, and she felt or feigned love where her vain and domineering spirit would at least have been gratified by the object of her passion owing every thing to her gifts.

The history of the Duc de Lauzun is well known. A younger brother of the family of Caumont, without fortune, brought to the court of Louis the Fourteenth to seek his fortune, with very moderate abilities, and no distinguished military service: he rose to such favour with the King, that he obtained his consent to marry

Mademoiselle de Montpensier, the King's first cousin, the greatest heiress in France, and possessing sovereign rights over many of her vast domains. Madame de Sevigné's lively letter on the subject gives a picture of the surprise excited in the court of Louis the Fourteenth by this event. It was such as showed the King he had done more than he ever intended to do for any subject. By a most cruel and unjustifiable exercise of arbitrary power the marriage was stopped, by his order, on the very day before its public celebration. Finding it not equally easy to prevent a private union between the parties, the unfortunate hero of these adventures, within a year afterwards, was on this account sent to the castle of Pignerol, a state-prison at the southern extremity of France, there to mourn the loss of his ambitious views, if not of his princess, and there he was actually detained ten years. The memoirs of the princess herself give the best account of her feelings on these arbitrary proceedings, which, however much she laments, never alter for a moment her belief in the infallible justice of the King. It is from other sources we are informed, that, after all the romance of life was over, when *he* was freed from his prison, and *she* from every illusion of passion, that they lived together on very bad terms, and that his violence, and as-

sumed authority over her, was such, as to have given rise to the report of his ordering her, by the unceremonious appellation of Louise d'Orleans, to draw off his boots.

Madame de Chevreuse, Madame de Montbazon, the Princess Palatine, and Madame d'Olonne, who figure in the Memoirs of the Cardinal de Retz, and other histories of the time, were all mere varieties of the same species of meddling character, which had distinguished la Grande Mademoiselle.

The unresisted despotism of Louis the Fourteenth repressed this general spirit of political intrigue. It was, however, perpetuated in the characters of Mesdames de Montespan and de Maintenon, and exhibited in all its deformity by the Princess des Ursins. It was suspended for a moment by the overwhelming profligacy of the Regent's court, but re-appeared in the base and feeble intrigues of the Châteauneufs, the Pompadours, and the Tencins of Louis the Fifteenth, till it sunk in the positive and irretrievable degradation of Madame du Barri.

The virtues of Louis the Sixteenth, and the showy endowments of his Queen, unfortunately for them both, transferred to her that power of interference, which, in other times, characters less appropriate had wielded with still less discretion. But the spirit of meddling intrigue which

in former days had been collected, as in a focus, around the mistress of the monarch or the minister, had, at the end of the last century, spread through the whole mass of female society. Every body had a circle of dependants, every body was a patron, or was patronised, according to the society in which they were found. All had some interests in life, which necessarily carried them into the tortuous and degrading paths of intrigue, where alone they could pursue their object; and where this object, however honourable or legitimate, could only be attained by a reciprocity of indirect means, and often of unworthy services. A sedulous cultivation of every power to please, to persuade, and to seduce, which belongs particularly to the female sex, was necessary to their success. It made the women, therefore, in general agreeable, intelligent companions, and sometimes inestimable friends. But the neglect of all the severer virtues so deteriorated the female character, and so banished all truth of principle from its social relations, that perhaps nothing less than the dreadful remedy administered by the Revolution could have awakened them to a sense of their real interests, and restored the women of France to their true and appropriate consideration in society. Let it, however, be remem-

bered, in a comparative view of the merits of the age of which we have been speaking, that, while the Duchesse de Longueville and her associates were neglecting the honourable distinctions and seemly virtues of their sex, in the indulgence of unrestrained passions, and the pursuit of a dubious fame, Madame de Sevigné, their contemporary, while adorned by every grace, was also devoted to every duty of her sex and situation. Mademoiselle de Vigean allowed not a mutual passion for an enamoured hero either as an excuse for misconduct or as the means of stepping into an indecorous celebrity. (1) Madame de Navailles incurred, with-

(1) The mutual passion of the Grand Condé (then Duc d'Enghien) and Mademoiselle Vigean is rendered interesting by the successful struggles she opposed to sentiments she more than participated. To conceal from the public eye his devotion to her, and not to offend that decorum, which was as yet exacted even from the most exalted rank, perhaps, too, in compliance with the love of mystery ever sought by real passion, she insisted on his feigning an attachment, and bestowing his public attentions on Mademoiselle de Bouteville Montmorency. But soon dreading the charms of her self-inflicted rival, her admirer, to convince her of his unshaken faith, not only immediately ceased to see his pretended mistress, but, in spite of all opposing difficulties of fortune and religion, made up a marriage for her with her *real* lover, the Chevalier de Chatillon, whom Condé, on his side, had dreaded as a proposed husband for

out hesitation, all the pains and penalties which it was then in the power of a young, angry, and absolute monarch to inflict, rather than betray those duties, which her conscience as well as

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the woman who, although without hopes of possessing himself, he could not bear to see the wife of another. The wild dictates of ungratified passion then led him to think of taking measures to obtain a divorce from his princess (of the family of Mailly Brezé), on the plea of a marriage too early in life for mutual consent, and thus to obtain the liberty of offering his hand, as well as his heart, to his virtuous mistress. But she, to avoid all further scandal, and to secure herself from importunities which she might doubt her own powers to resist, soon after the marriage of her pretended rival, retired from the world to the austerities of a Carmelite convent. In religion and in heaven she sought the only consolation of which sentiments like hers were capable, whose purity, as well as constancy, could not long be shared by an earthly lover.

In the Mémoires de Courart we are told, (speaking of the combat at the Porte St. Antoine during the Fronde,) that it was by a sort of miracle that the Prince of Condé escaped alive, not only because he exposed himself more than he had ever done in any previous action, but because " on disoit qui " St. Mesgrin, qui, outre qu'il étoit très vaillant, avoit depuis " longtems une haîne particulière contre Monsieur le Prince " à cause de la seconde fille du Marquis de Vigean, qui " est maintenant Carmelite, et dont St. Mesgrin étant fort " amoureux, et en termes de l'épouser, Monsieur le Prince " devint amoureux, et l'obligea de quitter prise, ce qu'il " n'avoit jamais pu oublier." — *Mémoires de Valentin Courart*, p. 112.

her situation dictated. (1) To these examples, taken from the immediate society of those who

(1) The Duchesse de Navailles was the dame d'honneur to the Queen of Louis the Fourteenth, to whose charge the conduct and behaviour of the maids of honour was committed, six of whom were then attached to the household of the Queen. It was a difficult and invidious duty, in which she could expect no assistance from her charge. They were all willing to be admired, and the King so willing to admire them, that Madame de Navailles soon discovered intentions of his Majesty to make visits to their apartment without passing through hers. Her expostulations he received at first with good humour, and then with such politeness as persuaded her she should escape his anger: but he soon gave her to understand, by no less grave a personage than le Tellier, not only that her conduct, if persisted in, would incur his serious displeasure, but that he desired she would abstain from any interference with the maids of honour; at the same time proposing to her several ways of accommodating herself to his wishes, and saving appearances with respect to herself. Madame de Navailles rejected them all; declared, as long as it pleased the King to leave her in her office, she would fulfil the duties of it to the best of her abilities. She threw herself at the King's feet, avowed all the obligations of herself and her husband to his favour, and beseeched him "de chercher ailleurs que "dans la maison de la Reine, qui est la vôtre, les objets de "vos plaisirs et de vos inclinations." The King was for a moment struck with her bold integrity, but continuing his clandestine visits, the intrepid dame d'honneur had gratings of iron placed at a certain window which had been the means of his entry at undue hours. The consequence was, at no long distance of time, the dismissal of herself and her husband from all their places at court, and an exile to the country, which her husband chose to share with her.

the least resembled them in conduct, might doubtless be added thousands of others less distinguished by their situation or their talents, but not less commendable for their virtues.

The scruples, the unconquered shame, and the early retreat of la Valière; the blustering demands of Monsieur de Montespan for a wife already the acknowledged mistress of Louis the Fourteenth, and the attention with which the children of this connexion were long concealed from the world, are all indubitable signs of the respect yet paid to public decency, and that fashion at least was still on the side of morality and good faith in the nearest relations of life.

If in England (as has been before observed) the political influence of women was inconsiderable during a reign remarkable for its gallantries, that influence had been still more insignificant during the austerities of our political commotions, and it is remarkable, that Henrietta Maria after sixteen years' residence among us, had not found a single Englishwoman either capable or disposed to adopt her political views, to second her schemes, or even to accompany her on the first short visit that she made to the continent in 1642, while more than half the people, and nearly all the nobility, remained still attached to the monarch, and to the monarchy. Lively,

petulant, and ill-judging as this Queen is described to have been (1), with what contempt we may suppose her looking down on the homely virtues of her subjects!—she, who had been brought up amidst all the political intrigues of her mother, Mary of Medicis, and taught to believe, that she was destined to bring back the country in which she reigned to the worship of the church of Rome.

However mistaken her opinions of her subjects on matters of religion and government, she might certainly have been justified in feeling them very inferior to those of the country from whence she came, in social qualities, and all the rational amusements of life. When with us "civil dudgeon first grew high," France already

(1) "Son tempérament étoit tourné du côté de la gayété "et parmi les larmes, s'il arrivoit de dire quelque chose de "plaisant, elle les arrêtoit en quelque façon, pour divertir "la compagnie. La douleur quasi continuelle qui lui don-"noit alors beaucoup de sérieux, et de mépris pour la vie, "la rendoit à mon gré plus solide, plus sérieuse, et plus "estimable qu'elle l'auroit peut-être été, si elle avoit tou-"jours eu du bonheur. * * * * * De son naturel elle étoit "un peu dépitée, et elle avoit de la vivacité. Elle soute-"noit ses sentimens avec de fortes raisons, mais elles étoient "accompagniés, d'une beauté, d'une raillerie, qui pouvoient "plaire et corriger tout ensemble les marques de hauteur "et de courage qu'elle a données dans les actions princi-"pales de sa vie." — *Madame de Motteville*, tom. i.

possessed a theatre, representing to an enlightened and intelligent audience many of the pieces which still charm their descendants. In France, meetings of persons, whose disposition, taste, and situation suited each other, were already habitual. Conversation on general subjects was already, by both sexes, cultivated as an accomplishment, and admired in both as a talent. In France men of letters were already called into general society, where their powers either of instruction or amusement were not only immediately encouraged by the lively commendations of their audience, but rewarded, by elevating them to a sort of social equality with their superiors in rank and riches.

In England, although the education of the nobility, titled and untitled, was as superior to that of any other of the cultivated nations of Europe as it has continued ever since; although many of them carried away from the public schools and colleges, not only a taste for learning, but the habits of literary or scientific occupations; yet to those born in a lower rank of life science and literature were only the means of raising them to distinction in the learned communities, to which they owed their proficiency, or to which they belonged. Instead of procuring them any influence in society, it was likely entirely to

alienate them from its intercourse: their occupations, their fame, and their advancement being confined to the rich endowments for the encouragement of learning which at that time held out still greater incentives to exclusive attachment than at present. While their works, therefore, enriched the general stock of knowledge, their talents in no respect contributed to the national fund of social enjoyment. The follies of the Fronde, the versatility of its heroes, and the adventures of its heroines, had already called forth a thousand occasional poets, who treated the object of their satire with the same gay frivolity they themselves treated the most serious affairs. While in France this period has left us volumes of epigrams, triolets, and *mazarinades* in every species of metre, hardly a single tolerable English stanza can be quoted on political subjects, from the year 1642 till the restoration. Those that remain are much more remarkable for their coarseness than their wit. (1) Had our sober-headed ancestors been as conversant with the follies of mankind as they were with their rights, the noble establishment of a consti-

(1) As "*The Rump, a Collection of Poems, &c. by the most famous Wits from* 1639 *to* 1661." Published in 1662, one vol. 8vo.

tutional monarchy, in which they so long anticipated the other nations of Europe, would probably never have required the "*manum emendatricem*" of the Revolution of 1688.

Meetings merely for social intercourse seem at this time to have formed no part of an English existence, except on occasions of treating or concluding a marriage, the birth or coming of age of an heir, &c. &c. The three great festivals allowed by the Church of England, even before they were attacked by the holy army, not of martyrs, but of sectaries, seem to have been enjoyed by the common people more than by the upper orders of society. At great country seats, open house was kept at these seasons for all the tenants. A custom, not abolished, as we see by Mr. Evelyn's Diary, till long after this date. (1)

Sometimes costly entertainments were made at the country-house of some great lord, on occasion of a royal progress. The Duchess of Newcastle mentions an entertainment given by

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(1) Mr. Evelyn says, in a letter to Dr. Bohun of the 18th of January, 1697, "I am planting an evergreen grove here "to an old house ready to drop, the economy and hospi- "tality of which my good old brother will not depart from, "but, *more veteram*, kept a Christmas in which we had "not fewer than 300 bumkins every holyday." — *Evelyn's Works*, vol. ii.

the Duke, her husband, to Charles the First and his Queen, the year after the King returned from being crowned in Scotland, which, she says, "cost "the Duke, in all, between fourteen and fifteen "thousand pounds;" an almost incredible sum in those days. "This entertainment was made "at Bolsover Castle, some five miles distant "from Welbeck, and he resigned Welbeck for "their Majesties lodging." — "Ben Jonson he "employed in fitting such scenes and speeches "as he could best devise, and sent for all the "gentry of the county to come and wait on their "Majesties." —(Life of the Duke of Newcastle, p. 140.)

In distant parts of the country, we must suppose the young people in the drawing-room partook of the gaiety going on in the hall, and morrice-dancers and mummers at Christmas, and Jack in the green and Maid Marion at May-day, supplied the place of the masks and pageants of the court. These masks, given sometimes by the court, and sometimes to it, by the students at the inns of court, by the city, or by some of its rich associations, seldom called forth the exercise of much wit in their composer, or of much taste and judgment in their audience. In Maitland's History of London, there is a detailed account of one of these masques, drawn up by

Whitelock, whose after-life was certainly not employed in contributing to the amusement of the royal family: it is thus announced: "A. D. "1633. The King being returned from his "progress into Scotland, the gentlemen of the "four inns of court resolved to entertain their "Majesties with a pompous masquerade, which "for curiosity of fancy, excellency of perform-"ance, and dazzling splendour, far excelled "every thing of the kind that had ever been seen "in England, the charge whereof (according to "a celebrated author, who was one of the com-"mittee appointed for the preparation of that "magnificent show) amounted to above twenty-"one thousand pounds. 'Tis not to be doubted, "but this enormous sum, which without a per-"adventure may justly be reckoned the greatest "that ever was expended in this kingdom on "any occasion, other than a coronation, will "whet the desire of the curious to have the "said magnificent, pompous, and incomparable "masquerade described; therefore, without "regarding its prolixity, I shall, for the satisfac-"tion of all such, insert an account thereof, as "published by the learned and ingenious White-"lock, one of the above-mentioned committee, "and author of the celebrated memorials."

To this account, which certainly keeps its

promise on the score of prolixity, the reader is referred in Maitland's History of London, p. 186. It is chiefly remarkable for the satire conveyed in a part of the entertainment on the too prevalent and abused habit of giving patents and exclusive privileges on frivolous pretences.

"First in this antimasque (1) rode a fellow "upon a little horse, with a great bit in his "mouth, and upon the man's breast was a bit, "with a head stall and reins fastened, and sig-

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(1) By antimasque was meant groupes of grotesque persons who on these occasions either preceded or were intermixed with the grand representation of the day. Thus, in the entertainment above quoted, the antimasques were first a band of beggars and cripples "mounted on the "poorest, leanest jades that could be gotten out of the "dust-carts and elsewhere," accompanied by an appropriate music of keys, tongs, &c. Then followed "many men "playing upon pipes, whistles, and instruments, sounding "like the notes of birds of all sorts," preceding what was called the antimasque of birds. "This was an owl in an "ivy bush, with many several sorts of other birds in a "cluster about the owl, gazing as it were upon her. These "were little boys put into covers of the shapes of those "birds, rarely fitted, and sitting on small horses with foot-"men going by them with torches in their hands. After "this antimasque came other musicians playing on bag-"pipes, hornpipes, and such kind of northern music, speak-"ing the following antimasque of *Projectors* to be of the "Scotch and northern quarters."— See MAITLAND's *History of London*.

" nifying a *Projector*, that none in the kingdom " might ride their horses but with such bits as " they should buy of him. Then came another " fellow, with a bunch of carrots on his head " and a capon on his fist, describing a *Projector*, " who begged a patent of monopoly, as the first " inventor of the art to feed capons fat with " carrots, and that none but himself should make " use of the invention, and have the privilege " for fourteen years, according to the statute. " Several other projectors were in like manner " personated in this antimasque, and it pleased " the spectators the more, because by them an " information was covertly given to the King " of these projects against the law; and the " attorney Noy, who had the most knowledge " of them, had a great hand in this antimasque " of the Projectors."

While in England Puritans and Presbyterians had agreed in declaring music an abomination, and had abolished the theatre as an immediate invention of Satan (1), Cardinal Mazarin

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(1) The following notice of the theatre occurs in a weekly newspaper, published during the Protectorate, from the 28th December to the 5th January, 1655: —

" This day there being a play at the Red Bull in " St. John's Street, contrary to the statute, some soldiers " were drawn out, who surprised them on the stage, and

had transplanted the opera, a production of his own country, at great expence to Paris. An opera, or drama entirely in music, was of recent invention even in Italy. Eclogues, pastoral cantatas, &c. had, indeed, been recited with choruses, accompanied or rather interspersed with music, from the beginning of the fifteenth century. In the year 1529, at an entertainment given at Messina by Don Garcia di Toledo to Donna Antonia Cordova, *I dui Pellegrini* of Luigi Tansillo, a "*componimento scenico*," was a part of the entertainment. It differed from eclogue only as comprising a complete action, with a happy ending. This exhibition was followed by many others of the same sort, given either at the fêtes of princes to one another, or on occasion of their visiting universities or other learned bodies, who often prepared something of this sort, got up with much expence of decoration; as in the case of the *Aretusa* of Alberto Lollia, a Ferrarese poet, acted in 1563, before the Duke Alphonso the second of Esté, and the Cardinal Luigi, his brother, "La rappresentò *Messer Ludovico* "*Belli*, fece la musica *Alphonso Viola*, fù l'ar-

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"returned with the players' habits (which they had seized) "upon themselves." — *Wroxton Collection of Pamphlets*, vol. xxxix.

" chitetto e depintor della scena *Messer Rinaldo* " *Costabili*, fece la spesa l'università degli scolari " di legge." At length appeared the *Aminta* of Tasso, a complete pastoral drama, accompanied by choruses and interacts of music. It was first acted at Ferrara in 1573, and the same year at Florence, with much magnificence of decoration and universal applause. Its success produced a crowd of imitations, which, in spite of the praises of their own day, have, in ours, sunk nearer the level of their real merits. Still these dramas were all to be recited, and not sung, and to be interspersed, not accompanied, by music. The music, it would seem, however, formed so attractive a part of the performance, that Orazio Vecchi, a poet and music-master of Modena, at last resolved to try the effect of a drama entirely accompanied by music; and his *Anfiparnasso* was represented in 1597. It was sung by *Arlequino*, *Pantalone*, *il Dottore*, and the other masks, then in complete possession of Italian comedy, and is considered as the first real attempt at the opera buffa.

Whether the same idea, under another form, had occurred at Florence as well as at Modena, or whether the success of the *Anfiparnasso* had any part in the contemporary attempt at Florence, seems doubtful. But the same year, 1597, Ot-

tavio Rinuncini, a noble Florentine, aided by Giacomo Corsi, a great lover of music, and protector of the arts, produced the first heroic melo-drama that Italy had yet seen. The *Dafné* was represented at the house of the above-mentioned Corsi, before the Grand Duchesse of Tuscany, with rapturous applause. It was followed, in 1600, by the *Euridice*, publicly exhibited at Florence on occasion of the marriage of Henry the Fourth with Mary of Medicis, to whom Rinuncini was a gentleman of the bed-chamber. The music of both these operas, and some others which succeeded them, was composed by Giacomo Peri, who is, therefore, regarded as the inventor of recitativo, and, together with Rinuncini and Corsi, as the founders of heroic or serious opera. (1)

The first produced at Paris was at the end of the carnival of 1647 to Anne of Austria and her court, at the private cost of Cardinal Mazarin. Madame de Motteville, who was present, calls it "une comédie (1) à machines, et en musique,"

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(1) See *Storia Critica de' Teatri Antichi e Moderni di Pietro Napoli Signoielli*, vol. vi. p. 4. *et passim.* Napoli, 1813.

(2) It will be remembered that the name of *comédie* was common to all theatrical pieces at this time. The subject of the first opera was *Orphée*, certainly not the title of a burletta.

and informs us, that the Cardinal "avoit fait "venir les musiciens de Rome avec de grands "soins et le machiniste aussi, qui étoit un homme "de grande réputation pour ces sortes de spec- "tacles. Les habits en furent magnifiques, et "l'appareil tout de même sorte." (2) She adds as a proof of the exact measure which Anne of Austria maintained between her pleasures and her devotions, that, in opposition to the Cardinal and to the Duke of Orleans, she would not allow the representations to continue in the ensuing Lent, and even went away herself, in the middle of the first representation, because it was given on a Saturday, and she retired to prepare for the religious duties of the ensuing day.

This opera, after three representations during the carnival in which it was produced, was repeated, in the following spring, at one of the fêtes given at court to the Duchesse de Longueville, on her return from Munster. But the opera, as a national entertainment, does not seem to have acquired its present popularity till a later period, when the magnificent fêtes of the youth of Louis the Fourteenth introduced, or rather confirmed, a taste for parade, for splendid dresses in assumed characters, dancers in rich uniform,

(1) Madame de Motteville's Mémoires, tom. i. p. 415.

and military representations of other countries. These, from the Place de Carouzel, and from the Louvre, were transplanted, imitated, and domiciliated in a theatre destined to their sole exhibition. (1) The French, however, seem to have reluctantly admitted their Italian visitor into the circle of their amusements until she had assumed

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(1) The next attempt at an Italian opera in Paris was at the fêtes of the marriage of Louis the Fourteenth in 1660, when the *Ercole Amante* was given, with a French translation of the poetry for those who did not understand Italian. From this time a taste for this species of drama seems to have gained ground in France. After two or three other attempts, frustrated by the death of its first patron, the Cardinal Mazarin, an Abbé Perrin obtained, in 1669, letters patent for the establishment of an "académie des opéras en langue Françoise." Under his direction the opera of *Pomone*, with French words of his own composition, was represented for eight successive months with much applause. This was followed by another under the name of *Les Peines et les Plaisirs de l'Amour*. But Perrin and his associates having disagreed, Jean Baptist Lulli, a native of Florence, by the favour of Madame de Montespan, was allowed to purchase their patents, and, in 1672, Lulli gave his first opera, *Les Fêtes de l'Amour et de Bacchus*. It was an arrangement of fragments of the music of different ballets which Lulli had composed for the King, adapted to the words of Quinault. This marriage of Italian music to French poetry succeeded so well to French ears, that it was followed by the operas of *Cadmus*, *Alceste*, *Thesée*, *Atys*, *Isis*, and many others, composed by the same united authors.— See *Des Maizeaux*, *Life of St. Evremond*, vol. i. p. 126.

an entirely French dress, and had learned to express herself in accents under which her original country was hardly discoverable, and this at a time when their own comic and tragic muse were already established in that general popularity which they have ever since maintained.

Without recurring to the incomparable farce (1) which had diverted the courtiers of Charles the Eighth, and was reproduced with undiminished effect to their descendants above a century afterwards, the French theatre possessed a regular comedy, in the *Visionnaires* of Desmarets, as early as the year 1637; and Corneille, after having produced the *Cid* in the same year, and *Horace*, *Cinna*, and *Polyeucte* in the succeeding years, gave them the *Menteur* in 1644, several years before the inimitable and unrivalled Molière had established their superiority in every species of legitimate comedy. (1) The *Venceslaus* of Rotrou, which dates even before

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(1) *L'Avocat Patelin*, first written by François Corbeuil in 1480, and since modernised by Brueys, who died in 1723.

(2) *La Mère Coquette* of Quinault, which Voltaire calls "pièce à la fois de caractère et d'intrigue, et même modèle "d'intrigue," appeared in 1664, when Molière had only produced *Les Amans Magnifiques*, *La Princesse d'Elide*, and *Le Médecin malgré lui*.

some of the chefs-d'œuvre of Corneille, still holds its place on the French theatre, and is still a proof of the priority of that theatre in regular heroic drama.

Those who shut their eyes to the beauties of this species of drama, and refuse to admit the data on which French tragedy must be judged, are essentially their own enemies, contract the sphere of their enjoyments, and convict themselves of as narrow a scope of intellect as any one, who, being a great admirer of Milton, should deny all beauty to the Rape of the Lock, and be insensible to the wit of Hudibras.

The tragic art may be compared to ideal beauty in the imitative arts. It must be nature, but it must be something more ; — it must be a generalized idea, formed from an accurate investigation and minute knowledge of details, which the author and the artist have the power of applying to the subjects of which they treat, and of placing in the situation they desire. Thus in both will be found a faithful representation of nature, although probably no individual could have sat for either of the pictures.

Tragedy is a representation of human nature in extraordinary situations ; comedy of those which may and do occur in every-day life. The one should have all the accuracy of a portrait,

marking every minute particular and little characteristic of the individual, or the class of individuals meant to be represented(1); the other, like the statue of a Jupiter, an Apollo, or a Mars, must personify the passion meant to be portrayed with all the concentrated expression gathered from every individual, and with the strongest features compatible with *perfect grace*, or in other words with *good taste*. It is in this *grace* or *good taste* that the English theatre is accused by its French rival of essentially failing; while it is retorted on the French theatre, that what is there esteemed *grace* is often so unnatural as to be still farther removed from *good taste*, in a representation of human life. If the foregoing definition of tragedy be true, we must candidly allow that the accusation brought forward against our theatre on the part of the French is often merited, before we proceed to notice what, according to our ideas of the true nature and end of tragedy, may be considered as a set-off against our faults.

(1) Schlegel has well remarked of Shakspeare's comic characters, " Les personnages dont il a dessiné les traits " avec détail sont, sous beaucoup de rapports, des individus " d'une nature très-particulière, mais ils ont cependant une " signification plus étendue, et l'on peut tirer des théories " universelles de leurs qualités prépondérantes."—SCHLEGEL, *Cours de Littérature Dramatique*, tom. ii. p. 377.

A distinguished English critic some years ago, in a laudable attempt to draw the public attention to the works of Ford, and other (perhaps too much neglected) dramatists previous to the Restoration, has asserted that the literature of England materially suffered by that event. Unfortunately for the success of the dramatic authors whom this critic protects, he has brought forward scenes and passages from their works which he compares and equals with Shakspeare, — a luckless mode of praise, which has always the effect of magnifying the faults and lessening the merits of the passages compared, by recalling all the beauties of the inimitable original. (1) And here, before any attempt is made to estimate the comparative excellence of the two national theatres, it is wished to withdraw Shakspeare from our consideration.

The admirers of the beauties of the French theatre (and the author of these pages professes to be one) can have no objection, and the zealous and exclusive advocates of the English drama, if they have a just appreciation of Shakspeare, of the enormous and incalculable distance at which he has left all rivals, in all languages and of all ages, will boldly place the scale of com-

(1) Edinburgh Review.

parison, without involving Shakspeare in a parallel, either with the writers of his own or those of any other country — Shakspeare, who, if the soberness of our language allowed of it, would be hailed by the title of "*Divine*" with a much more universal assent of his country than ever it was bestowed, in an age of enthusiasm, on a hardly less irregular poet. (1) An admirable and enthusiastic writer, in a general view of European literature, and its national effects (2), after speaking of several of Shakspeare's dramas with a discrimination of his faults, and a feeling of his peculiar beauties, which led to suppose she was really aware of the poetic eminence, the unattainable height on which he stood, unfortunately adds, that "Otway, Rowe, "et quelques autres Poëtes Anglois ont fait des "tragédies toutes dans le genre de Shakspeare, "et son génie en Venice Sauvée a presque "trouvé son égal." — Here the English enthusiasts for Shakspeare feel themselves obliged to differ as entirely from this judgment of their native bard as from any former critic of the same nation. But with no mean opinion, no unjust prejudices, no under-valuing of the genius, taste, and candour of its distinguished author,

(1) Danté. (2) Madame de Stäel, *L'Allemagne*.

no longer, alas! to animate literature with the speculations of her enlightened mind, nor society with the charms of her inimitable conversation.

Her opinions on this subject are only an additional proof, that the genius of Shakspeare can never, from the nature of things, come under the consideration of any French critic, but in so partial a manner as to justify all the faults they have found in him. To the most candid and informed, he can only appear as a voluminous writer of tragedies, many of which contain sublime poetic conceptions, and admirable descriptions of the human mind, and of human sufferings. Of these their admiration must be chiefly confined to those dramas, not founded on facts in English history, but on legends, which to foreigners, unacquainted with the obscure English translations of the day, may well pass for inventions of the poet, and whose characters, therefore, are of more general application. (1) In his comedies, *They* cannot wade through confused and improbable plots, and crowds of supernumerary characters, to detect the beautiful samples of every species of poetry scattered through them all. *They* cannot enter with in-

(1) See Madame de Stäel, *L'Allemagne*, tom. i. p. 282.

terest into the peculiarities of a people, at that time in a much less artificial system of society than themselves. *They* cannot, therefore, separate from his great theatrical faults the sublime excellencies which place him at the head of poets, in the noblest and the most exalted acceptation of that name — as a great moral teacher, a profound master of the human heart and passions, possessing powers of imagination capable of placing his fellow-creatures in a creation of his own, and raising them above the sad realities of life.

Schlegel alone seems penetrated with a just admiration of the miraculous powers of his genius. After an analytical view of his various perfections as a dramatic writer, and a candid and sometimes a too far-fetched apology for his faults, he thus sums up his titles to immortality : " Déjà jugé au " tribunal de la postérité, à celui des nations " étrangères, sa gloire ne peut plus être obscurcie " par le mépris qu'on affecte pour telle époque, " pour tel goût national, pour telle forme de " composition. Et en offrant à nos regards les " traits les plus brillans du caractère des siècles et " des peuples divers, la hardiesse de l'imagination, " et la profondeur de la pensée, le don d'émou- " voir fortement, et la finesse des aperçus, le culte " de la nature, et la connoissance de la société,

" l'enthousiasme du poëte, et l'impartialité du " philosophe, il paroit fait pour représenter à lui " seul, l'esprit humain, dont il réunit dans le plus " haut degré les qualités les plus opposées." (1)

It is certain that before the Restoration (besides the immortal genius of Shakspeare) we possessed a cluster of dramatic poets (2), who, with strong powers of imagination and considerable poetic merit, have left behind a host of dramas, which, if they do little honour to the contemporary taste of the nation, are authentic records of the original genius and vigorous intellect of their authors.

To this national taste, and to the peculiar social habits of the nation, may be fairly attributed all their faults. For to whom and where were these pieces represented? Not to an informed (or at least polished) audience, of a quick versatile nation, but to the lower orders of a people naturally slow to move, and requiring strong appeals to all the unvarnished feelings of human nature, independent of any conventional modes of society. These pieces were not written for, or exhibited at, a court, or

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(1) Schlegel, *Cours de Littérature Dramatique*, tom. ii. p. 408.

(2) Johnson, Massinger, Shirley, Decker, Rowley, Beaumont and Fletcher, Ford, Webster, Field, and Marlow.

called into notice by the criticisms of a minister. They were first produced at theatres in the outskirts of London; generally in the immediate neighbourhood of the retreats of profligacy and prostitution, which can leave no doubt of the complexion and character of their habitual audience.

While Cardinal Richelieu was endeavouring in vain to extend his despotism into the territory of genius, and to stifle the good taste which had already produced the *Cid*, and an audience who felt and admired its beauties; the pedantic James the First was regaled at Cambridge by a long series of bad jokes, in worse Latin, under the name of a comedy in five long acts, with two still longer prologues, written for the occasion by an indigenous poet, of the harmonious name of *Ruggles*, and acted by members of the university. (1) No wonder that under these circumstances the theatre, forming no part of the amusement of the upper orders of society, and frequented only by the idle, the ignorant, and the profligate, should have incurred the

(1) Ignoramus, acted before James the First on his visit to Cambridge in 1627.

disgrace and abuse to which its immorality exposed its genius, with the reformers of the ensuing reign.

Masques representing mythological or allegorical personages, which were common long before the times of which we are speaking, cannot be received as decisive of the merits of the theatre of either nation. They had in both succeeded to the exhibitions which, under the name of *mysteries*, had in all times been patronised by the church. They were not representations of human life or character, but merely modes of adulation to the great, used only on public occasions, and, being addressed more to the eyes than the understanding, were sure of being well received. We shall not, therefore, endeavour to press into the service of the English theatre one of the most exquisitely beautiful poems in our language, in which Milton, under the name of a *Masque*, has given proof of the perfection which he attained in every mode of poetry which his pure and exalted genius deigned to adorn.

It is not here pretended to pass in critical review any of the English dramas previous to the Restoration: in many of them will be found plots admirably contrived to suspend the mind in anxious interest as to the issue of the scenes

before it (1); forcible displays of the human heart, and its sufferings under the influence of stormy or unlawful passions; exquisite descriptions of female tenderness, its powers and effects, and frightful representations of the remorse and horror of great criminals. But in the choice of their subjects they seem often to have been determined only by an excess of crimes and cruelties in the conduct of their principal personages, without sufficiently considering whether the action which calls them forth is *dramatic* as well as *natural*. To these crimes and cruelties they often fail to lend that art and that concealment which such conduct must suppose to render it possible. They treat of them with all the bold simplicity of another era of society, in which indeed similar crimes are quite as likely to be committed, but have no pretence to being dramatic.

Thus *The Unnatural Combat* of Massinger affects the mind in a quite different, and a much more disagreeable manner than *Les Frères Ennemis* of Racine. The French poet has envenomed the hatred of the two brothers by a

(1) As in *The Duke of Milan* of Massinger, where, till near the end of the last act, no guess can be made at the *dénouement*.

rival passion for the same mistress, which however harmonizes their characters in some degree with the feelings of the audience: while the English dramatist, in addition to the sufficiently disgusting rivalry of the father and son, has superadded the horrible love of the father for his daughter, to make his character more execrable, and her situation more irretrievably dreadful; but which in fact leaves him without any claim to our sympathy, and her beyond the reach of our compassion.

It is unnecessary to remark on the coarseness of expression in our ancient dramatists, because the language of society has undergone such a change since their day, that it would be somewhat difficult to ascertain what belonged to the phraseology of the times, and what to the bad company to which the authors addressed themselves. But their plots are sometimes so essentially indecent, as to defy any delicacy of expression sufficiently to veil them, or any company so bad as to admit of their theatrical representation. (1) Nor must it be objected, that *The Unnatural Combat*, *The Duke of Gandia*, &c. are not more improper subjects than *Phædra*,

(1) As *The Wife of a Month* of Beaumont and Fletcher, and many others.

Myrrha, &c. because in these last pieces the whole art of the poet is exerted in concealing his subject, as in nature such crimes must always seek concealment, and betray themselves only as the author exhibits them, in their dreadful effects on the moral being and happiness of his personages. But our old writers advance in licence of language as they advance in licence of situation, and shock the ears of their audience by making them immediately aware of the flagitious company into which they have been led. Besides, if (as the author believes) it is the province and legitimate end of tragedy to elevate as well as to affect the human mind, here our dramatists entirely fail. They either excite horror and disgust, from which we retire with an earnest desire to relieve ourselves as soon as possible, or they describe overwhelming distress accumulated on the head of some innocent being, plunged into irremediable crimes, which leaves us oppressed with a melancholy, and, for the most part, with an exaggerated idea of the necessary evils of social existence, and a false opinion of the moral government of the world.

It is here, and with reason, that the French boast of the conduct and tone of their tragic muse; the elevation of her sentiments, the deli-

cacy with which they are always expressed, the purity of her morals, and the dignity of her tone, always completely separated from that of her comic sister. It is true that, for a long time, she never spoke but from the mouths of heroes, kings, or ministers, and is accused by her English detractors of being often, in her long-winded tirades, as tedious and as little interesting as those illustrious personages have, in subsequent ages, sometimes in reality appeared. From the same quarter she is likewise accused of always contenting herself with a recital of the events which ought most essentially to interest her, and to require her presence; of sometimes listening patiently, while torn by conflicting passions, and under the most cruel circumstances, to the exposition of the whole plan of an ensuing campain, as in *Mithridate;* and sometimes to the recitation of a sort of gazette extraordinary, containing its success and casualties, as in the *Cid.*

However true these accusations may be, and however the French theatre, in times subsequent to those of which we are speaking, may have advanced nearer towards the truth of what may be called *theatrical nature,* it is certain, that, on our theatre, some subsequent attempts to *unbuskin* tragedy, and to strip her entirely of the "gor-"geous pall," which the pure taste of Milton

(in spite of his republican severity) required for her attire (1), have been completely unsuccessful.

Lillo, an author free from all the grossness of ideas and of diction which disgraced his predecessors, and endowed with the truest tragic pathos, has left us several dramas, founded on catastrophes which had actually taken place in private life. (2) One of these, *The Fatal Curiosity*, is a tragedy cited by the classical Harris (3) as the model of a perfect tragic fable, and the plot, it must be granted, is singularly and eminently pathetic.

This piece was revived some years ago on Drury-lane theatre, as an essay of this species of drama, with every advantage from the judgment and good taste of the manager; (4) and, although supported by the all-powerful and all-accomplished actress who at that time illustrated English tragedy, it entirely failed of success.

The close adherence to individual and unelevated nature, undignified by any previous

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(1) " Or Tragedy in gorgeous robe come sweeping by."
Il Penseroso.

(2) As *George Barnewell*, *Arden of Feversham*, and *The Fatal Curiosity*.

(3) Harris's Philological Enquiries, vol. i. p. 151.

(4) The late J. P. Kemble.

distinction, and unaccompanied by any ennobling circumstances; the poverty necessary to be observed in the dresses and the absence of all species of decoration from the scene; although all strictly natural and obligatory, according to the subject chosen, were in direct opposition to dramatic effect, and essentially lessened the interest of the piece. The long train of ideas, which a sudden reverse in fortune or in character excites in the human mind, and which so powerfully increases the weight of misfortune, was precluded. Two miserable-looking beings, complaining of want and poverty, and resolving to commit a murder to enrich themselves, present nothing either to astonish or elevate the mind. We cannot participate in their degraded feelings, nor can we believe that they themselves feel the same horror at their meditated crime as Macbeth, a great chieftain, a successful general, honoured with public applause, and with his sovereign's favour; who is led to commit a crime, which we cannot suppose his imagination ever before harboured, by a most imposing supernatural agency, and by the ambitious character of a beloved wife, acting on a dangerous, but not degrading, passion for power. Even *The Gamester*, a story that comes home to every bosom, and which is

likely to occur every day in the circles around us, as a drama, wants that previous elevation of sentiment and situation which is requisite to ennoble our sorrows and the misery of those who excite them. Could it be possible for private sufferings, and the herd of griefs unparticipated by the world, to become the subjects of tragedy, tragedy would immediately cease to be resorted to as an amusement. What human being may not inwardly say, "Too much *such* "sorrow hast thou had already?" The most acutely-feeling minds will, therefore, always be those who require the greatest degree of elevation of sentiment, in fictitious calls on their sympathy. The excesses to which the German theatre has been led by this homely species of drama are irrelevant to our subject. But let it be remarked, that the ridicule stamped by an inimitable English parody(1) on the morals and the taste of these pieces, has preserved our own theatre from the lamentable fate which for a moment impended over it, of reproducing all their faults in English translations.

The Restoration, which gave us back our national theatre, gave us back an audience ac-

(1) *The Rovers, or the Double Arrangement*, published in the Anti-Jacobin.

customed to the theatres of France; no wonder, then, that "unhappy Dryden," and indeed "all "the wits of Charles's days," took the shortest road to theatrical success, by translating or by imitating the dramas of France. It was a much less tedious and less laborious task than pruning the luxuriance of those of our native growth, so as to render them admissible in the more cultivated and more artificial soil where they were required. Hence arose a mongrel race of tragedies, which combined the faults of both their parents. Hence, Shakspeare himself lay for a time neglected under a mass of writers, whose names are only known to the unerring judgment of posterity by the satire of Dryden. Hence, the bombast into which that great genius was himself often betrayed, while we know how much, as a critic, he condemned his own practice as a dramatist. In his admirable Essay on Dramatic Poetry he proves himself to be perfectly aware of all the faults of the French theatre; and if he speaks with too much partiality of those of our own, and adopts upon some points popular mistakes, he has sealed for ever the proof of his good taste, in opposition to that of the day, by his animated praises of Shakspeare, and by the apologies he thinks necessary for bestowing them. Lord Lansdowne, his contemporary, in his

"Essay on unnatural Flights in Poetry," expresses the same opinion of Dryden's taste, and of the causes which he allowed to misguide although not to deceive it.

"Our king return'd, and banish'd peace restored,
"The Muse went mad to see her exiled lord;
"On the crack'd stage the bedlam heroes roar'd,
"And scarce could speak one reasonable word.
"Dryden himself, to please a frantic age,
"Was forced to let his judgment stoop to rage;
"To a wild audience he conform'd his voice,
"Complied to custom, but not err'd by choice:
"Deem then the people's, not the writer's sin,
"Almanzor's rage, and rants of Maximin."

The priority of the English theatre in legitimate comedy we may assume from the works of Ben Jonson, who died the same year that gave the *Visionnaires* of Desmarets to the French stage. But the characters of Ben Jonson are too much individualized to be of general interest. The peculiarities and follies of many of his personages are as much out of date as the cut of their doublet and hose. They are portraits, still interesting to his countrymen, from preserving the dress and colour of the times; but their entirely local tints diminish their excellence as faithful transcripts of human nature. His pieces, therefore, have most of them become obsolete, without having been popular.

Could Comedy ever be supposed faithfully "to hold the mirror up to nature," we might blush at belonging to the nature which her English mirror reflected in the works of the "mob of gentlemen who wrote with ease" immediately after the Restoration. They outrage decency as well as morality, both in the dialogue and in the conduct of their pieces, and describe manners which could never have existed, except in the purlieus of their own theatre. But comedy we know can only be implicitly trusted as a recorder of the excesses of a metropolis, and of the fashionable follies and peculiarities of its inhabitants; and certainly the highly-coloured and coarse sketches which she gave of those of London at this period, bear no favourable comparison with similar representations in France.

Already had the incomparable Molière enthroned the comic muse on the French theatre. His satire was directed against the follies, not of a metropolis, but of human nature; his portraits exhibited whole classes of individuals; and he seized the ridicules of the age, as well as those of his own particular country. His wit, his wisdom, and his gaiety, were the produce of France, but became the property of all Europe. It is a property which has since been so borrowed from, and pillaged, that when we now

see the frequently-stolen goods in the hands of their original owner, they have lost the charm of surprise and the merit of novelty. But so long as misers and misanthropes, false saints and affected women, silly husbands and ignorant physicians exist in the world, so long will Molière remain their unrivalled painter, historian, and satirist.

CHAPTER V.

INFLUENCE OF THE FIRST YEARS OF THE MAJORITY OF LOUIS THE FOURTEENTH ON THE SOCIETY AND SOCIAL HABITS OF FRANCE.—ST. EVREMOND.—DUCHESSE DE MAZARIN.—NINON DE L'ENCLOS.—HOTEL DE RAMBOUILLET.—FÊTES AT VERSAILLES.—CHANGE WHICH TOOK PLACE DURING THE REIGN OF LOUIS.—STATE OF SOCIETY AT THE TIME OF HIS DEATH.

"Au commencement du dix-septième siècle, il "n'y avoit point cinquante carrosses à Paris: "dans le règne de Louis Quatorze tout le monde "en avoit, on ne pouvoit aller à la cour autrement. "On ne fut plus reçu sur les mules; l'usage "fut laissé à quelques conseillers au parlement, "et cessoit pour eux et pour toujours vers "le milieu du règne de Louis Quatorze." (Mém. du Duc de Richelieu, tom. i. p. 192.)

The adoption of this general use of wheel carriages produced a greater change in the habits of social life, and had more influence on the political state of the country, than may be at first supposed. We have been so long accustomed to their use, that the habits of a coun-

try, or the life of a great metropolis without them, does not immediately present itself to our imagination. The state of public roads, which the necessity of travelling on horseback supposes, must immediately influence all military movements and all communication of intelligence, must triple the expence of all commercial transfers, and prevent, or render difficult, all merely social meetings, except between the nearest neighbours.

When Laporte, the valet-de-chambre to Anne of Austria, tells us, that in the winter of the year 1636, between Piteaux and Paris, on the route of Orleans, the road was so bad, that the Queen was obliged to sleep in her carriage, because neither the mules nor carts that carried her baggage could possibly arrive (1), we may conceive how little winter travelling there could have been in France. Although coaches were already known and used in Paris, they were so unlike the modern vehicles of the same name, that the pleasures, engagements, and assignations of the young men were still pursued on horseback. The trick which the Comte de Grammont boasts of having played to his friend the Duc de Brissac, at the door of Marion de

(1) Mémoires de la Porte, p. 114.

L'Orme (1), could only have taken place between cavaliers; and the occupation *de garder les manteaux* could never have passed into an insulting bye-word, had well-lined modern carriages been the conveyance of the day. A printed paper is yet extant in the King's library at Paris, announcing in all its details to the public, the establishment by government of *porte flambeaux* and *porte lanternes;* persons provided with them were to be posted at the Louvre, the Palais de Justice in the Carrefours, and other public places at Paris. These extempore illuminations must have been very necessary in the streets of a great town, still frequented by horsemen, where no aid of light was derived, either from the doors of private houses or the windows of shops; the habitual darkness only made more visible from the occasional flambeaux carried before some persons of distinction by their own servants, or accompanying their coach.

This establishment of *porte flambeaux*, which was to take place in October 1662, is announced with all the forms of a long preamble, and surrounded with all the exclusive privileges which could have accompanied the most important measure of internal government. It is a curious

(1) See Mémoires de Grammont.

example of the minute details into which the hierarchy of despotic power had already entered in France. It calls itself, " l'établissement de " porte flambeaux, et porte lanternes, à louage " dans la ville et fauxbourgs de Paris, et toutes " autres villes du royaume, par lettres patentes " du roi, verifiées au parlement, et réglément " fait par la dite cour, des salaries des dits " porte flambeaux et porte lanternes." Then follow the orders, which forbid any body from becoming a *porte flambeaux*, or a *porte lanterne*, without an express permission from the individual who has obtained this privilege from the King, to the exclusion of all others, under pain of a thousand francs penalty. The price is fixed for the hire of a *porte lanterne* at " 3 sous par " ¼ d'heure pour les gens qui vont à pied, et " pour les gens qui vont en carrosses et en " chaise, 5 sous;" and the public are then assured, " que cette commodité de pouvoir aller " et venir, et d'être éclairé à si peu de frais, fera " que les gens d'affaires et de négoce sortiront " plus librement; que les rues en seront bien " plus fréquentées la nuit, ce qui contribuera " beaucoup à exempter la ville de Paris de " voleurs."

To nightly depredators the darkness of the streets must have been very favourable. Thus

we see Boileau makes one of the torments of a town life, the dread of thieves:

" Que dans le marché neuf tout est calme et tranquille,
" Les voleurs à l'instant s'emparent de la ville,
" Le bois le plus funeste, et le moins fréquenté,
" Est, au prix de Paris, un lieu de sureté.
" Malheur donc à celui, qu'une affaire imprévue
" Engage un peu tard au détour d'une rue,
" Bientôt quatre bandits lui serrant les côtés
" La bourse, il faut se rendre," &c. &c.

BOILEAU, *Sat.* 6.

In the former regency of Mary of Medicis the streets of Paris had been subject to the still greater dangers of frequent and fatal rencontres between the rival princes and nobility, over whom the court had so little the power of control, that the fair of St. Germains was put off in the year 1612, to avoid the occasions it might give for renewing such quarrels, by the great concourse of disorderly people; and the parliament, at the Queen's desire, made an arrêt to authorize the citizens taking arms, and laying down chains against any drawing of swords in the streets. Winwood's Letters, who writes from Paris in the year 1612, are full of accounts of such outrages. " There was yesterday a bloody quarrel fought " in this town near the Place Royale, upon a " sudden occasion of the beating of some lakeys

" (laquais) by certain gentlemen, between whom " and the lakeys' masters there grew such hot " partakings, as that 4 gentlemen and 3 lakeys " were left dead on the place." (Winwood's Letters, vol. iii. p. 352.)

" The Prince of Conti's and the Comte de " Soissons's coaches meeting in a narrow place " near the Louvre, by the bad driving of their " coachmen jostled against each other, and came " to blows between their followers, who de- " parting in that fashion one from another, did, " against the next morning, call and assemble " together such numbers of their friends and fol- " lowers, as that the Duke of Guise joyning " with his brother-in-law, the Prince of Conti, " and the Prince of Condé with the Comte de " Soissons his uncle, they came out into the " streets with at least 3 or 400 horse a piece. " * * * * * The chains have been set up all " night in many streets, and corps de gardes " kept near the town-houses." (Winwood, vol. iii. p. 247.)

" There do daily break forth new quarrels " between the nobility in this town, who are " here in greater numbers than usually have " been heretofore, whereof one, being between " Mr. d'Andelot and Mr. Balagny, was presently " taken up ; and another fell out the other day

" between the Colonel d'Ornano and one Mr. " St. André, who, fighting in the streets, were " both hurt, and to avoid the mischief that " might ensue from partakings, the gates of the " town were for a time shut up." (Winwood, vol. iii. p. 324.)

How long the monopoly of *porte lanternes* continued a profitable concern, we know not; but at the end of the reign of Louis the Fourteenth, the luxury of carriages was so universal (1), that riding among the young men was confined entirely to the manége, to hunting, and to their military life. A change of dress had indeed necessitated a change in their mode of conveyance. The military costume was no longer that of the court; their boots and cloaks had disappeared, except when with their regiments; and the knots of ribbons, the short sleeves, the long ruffles, the lace, fringe and embroidery, and the flowing periwigs now general, were perfectly incompatible with an evening

(1) At the death of Louis the Fourteenth there were supposed to be 300 carriages to be hired (*voitures de remise*) at Paris. The Regent Duke of Orleans in 1716 had allowed a grant of a livre a day on each of these carriages, to be levied in favour of the Ducs d'Aumont and d'Antin. But the gift was considered as so invidious, that he was obliged to revoke it. See *le Montey*, p. 276.

ride from the Louvre to the Marais. This dress was soon carried to such excess, as to be a legitimate object of ridicule on their theatre. Molière's two marquises in *Les Précieuses Ridicules* were caricatures of it; and the account given of it by *Geroute* is said to have been a portrait of the appearance of the Duc de Candale, *the* fine gentleman of that day. (1)

From this dress, its inaptness to all manly exercises, and the effeminate manners which were supposed to accompany it, first crept in those

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(1) Louis Charles Gaston de Candale de Foix, son of Bernard Duc d'Epernon by Gabrielle Angelique, a legitimated natural daughter of Henry the Fourth.

Another detailed account of the excesses of the fashionable dress of the times is given by Sganarelle in the *Ecole des Maris*. He asks, what shall ever oblige him —

——— " à porter de ces petits chapeaux,
" Qui laissent éventer leur débiles cerveaux,
" Et de ces blonds cheveux, de qui la vaste enflure
" Des visages humains offusque la figure?
" De ces petits pourpoints sous le bras se perdant,
" Et de ces grands collets jusqu'au nombril pendants;
" De ces manches qui à table on voit tâter les sausses,
" Et de ces cotillons appellés haut-de-chausses;
" De ces soùliers mignons, de rubans revêtus,
" Qui vous font ressembler à des pigeons pattus;
" Et de ces grands canons, où, comme en des entraves,
" On met le matin ses deux jambes esclaves,
" Et par qui nous voyons, ces messieurs les galans
" Marcher écarquillés ainsi que des volants?"

false and ridiculous ideas which so long dictated all subsequent representations of French characters on our theatre; where a Frenchman (always dubbed a marquis) was represented with a powdered toupée, a hat under his arm, showy clothes, and a snuff-box in his hand.

The expence of dress to the young men was often ruinous. Rich attire and magnificence of costume was a privilege of the privileged; it could not be attempted by the lower orders; and such importance was attached to it, that not only minute descriptions of dress are often given in the memoirs of the times, but likewise in grave official reports. Thus the dress of Mary of Medicis, on the opening of the States General in 1614, is minutely detailed in the *Cérémonial François*, tom. ii. p. 269. And on the entry of Louis the Fourteenth into Paris after his marriage in 1660, the greffier of the parliament of Paris in his *procès verbal* reports exactly the dress of the King on that occasion. Louis the Fourteenth, both from taste and policy, encouraged great expence in dress, and in a costume peculiar to his court. He, too, first imagined an uniform for the particularly favoured of his society, as a still farther distinction, depending entirely on himself. *Les Justaucorps*

bleus, Voltaire says, were almost as eagerly sought after as *le cordon bleu*, and with some reason, as the one was a probable step to the other. (1) As a further means of crushing every remains of independence in the aristocracy, he insisted on the title and rank of maréchal (because military, and entirely depending on himself) taking place of that of Duc et Pair, and always called those who were maréchals, *Mr. le Maréchal*, and never by their hereditary titles. In like manner he decided a question of precedence in voting, between the peers and the presidents of the parliament, by declaring the peers only to vote first at the *lits de justice* where himself was present, as if their rank proceeded from him alone.

The Marquis de Vardes, when he returned to court, after an exile of twenty years, in a *justaucorps bleu*, then no longer the livery of favour, with some difficulty turned off the laugh which his appearance excited by telling the King, "Quand on avoit le malheur de lui déplaire, on "étoit non-seulement malheureux, mais ridicule."

(1) There was a regular warrant (*brevet*) granted for permission to wear these justaucorps. One of these *brevets* is preserved in the works of Louis the Fourteenth, vol. vi. p. 375.

It were well if the dress of Louis the Fourteenth's court had continued peculiar to it. The portraits of the day sufficiently inform us how incompatible it was with grace and beauty; while the Spanish cloak, broad falling down collar, or small ruff, which had immediately preceded it, are still resorted to in painting, to get rid of the altered remains of the dress which immediately followed, and which soon became general in Europe. This change, however unlucky for the lovers of the picturesque, is perhaps one of the least essential which the reign of Louis the Fourteenth produced, not only on the manners, but the character of his country. All independence of feeling, all individual consideration and power, all personal dignity of sentiment were crushed under the imposing glitter with which a young, handsome, showy monarch began in fêtes and tournaments, and continued in ill-judged, but successful wars, to disguise the sceptre of arbitrary power, which the follies of the Fronde had left undisputed in his hands.

However various the paths to distinction, honour, and fame, and however various the decisions of men in their choice, it will invariably be found, that success attends only those whose character happens to suit the age in which they appear, and the circumstances and situation in

which they are called into action. No abilities, however distinguished, without this adventitious aid ever rose above their natural level, or even attained the success they deserved. Individual happiness yet more surely depends on the same causes. In the lottery of human life we are sometimes tempted to think that if the tickets were distributed, as the Duc de Mazarin is said to have drawn lots for the services of the different members of his household, lucky changes might often be made which would benefit and relieve both parties.

Thus Louis the Sixteenth would probably have been honourably distinguished as a college preceptor, and his unfortunate Queen as an amiable and fascinating individual, in the best society of her capital; Charles the First might have served as the model of a well-educated English gentleman of his day; and Queen Anne as an appropriate wife to a country Tory clergyman.

Louis the Fourteenth was as peculiarly fortunate in the age and circumstances in which he lived, as in the people over whom he was called to reign. The foibles of *his* character were the foibles of *theirs;* both his faults and merits were essentially national. His two first manifestations of power towards his neighbours would, in the

sovereign of any other nation, have been as ill-judged as they were unjust. (1) But every

(1) At the public entry of a Swedish minister into London in the year 1661, the Comte d'Estrades, the French ambassador, with a numerous suite, came to a positive engagement in the streets of London with the Baron de Watteville, the Spanish ambassador, for precedence. If, as Voltaire says, (*Siècle de Louis Quatorze*, tom. i. p. 297.) the Spaniards killed the horses in the French carriages, and then marched "l'épée nue, comme en triomphe," it was Charles the Second, in whose metropolis, at a peaceful ceremony, such an outrage had taken place, who ought to have demanded satisfaction. But Louis immediately recalled his ambassador from Spain, sent away the Spanish ambassador from Paris, and declared if Philip the Fourth (his father-in-law) did not publicly recognize the priority of the crown of France in all ceremonies, he should immediately declare war. The year after (1662) the insolence of the Duc de Crequi, his ambassador at Rome, and the intolerable licence of his servants and suite, who had attacked sword in hand a party of the Pope's * guards in the streets of Rome, at last roused the Romans to reprisals, and a party of the same troops, thus offended, surrounded the house of the ambassador, and fired on his servants. On this occasion, instead of the mutual apologies due from both parties, but more especially from the first aggressor — the King — the eldest son of the church, not content with the Pope's hanging two of the offenders, and banishing the Governor of Rome, who was supposed to have connived at punishing the insolence of the French, immediately seized Avignon, and threatened to besiege Rome, till the Pope had not only banished his brother, and sent his nephew to apologize to Louis at

* Alexander the Seventh (Chigi).

Frenchman in authority would have been happy to have done the same, and was delighted with his King for doing it for him. Under these circumstances, the personal character of the monarch became the established principle of his government, and his personal favour the paramount object, even of those whose disposition and talents, in other times, or in a differently-constituted government, would have made them the most independent of it. Fashion ranged herself on the side of power; against their united authority no abilities could compensate, no services excuse the slightest offence; while credit seems to have been given them for not always visiting the objects of their displeasure with the severe dispensations of Richelieu.

The Marquis de Vardes, exiled for a forgery which ought to have turned him out of all good company, without the necessity of banishing him from court, and Bussy Rabutin, whose caustic and slanderous pen no punishment could repress, and whose vanity no mortification could subdue, exiled to their own estates, extolled the

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Paris, but erected a pillar at Rome (long since destroyed) to commemorate the insolence of the French to a government from whose weakness they had nothing to dread, and whose honour they ought to have respected.

mildness of a monarch who had not, like his predecessor, retained them in the Bastille for much slighter offences. (1) And here the change in independence of character and sentiment is remarkable. The cruel imprisonments of the former reign met sometimes with characters who, while suffering, resisted and finally overcame their tormentors. The Commandeur de Jars, sent to the Bastille by Richelieu as suspected of having some concern in the intrigues of Chateauneuf, the Garde des Sceaux, was not only condemned to death and led to the scaffold, but actually had his eyes bound to receive the stroke, when, finding all attempts were vain to make him speak, he was released, and restored to the world and to the court. The Marquis de Chau-

(1) " Le Comte de Crémail fut mis à la Bastille pour " avoir averti le Roi Louis Treize, quand il étoit en Lor- " raine, que sa personne n'étoit pas en sureté, l'armée des " Lorraines etant plus forte que la sienne. Le Cardinal (de " Richelieu) l'a fait mettre en prison pour avoir *donné de* " *l'appréhension au Roi*, quoiqu'elle fut juste et raisonnable."

" M. de Gouillé très-bien fait, qui avoit été élevé page, " fut mis à la Bastille par l'adresse d'une célèbre fille de " joye qu'il entretenoit. Comme il la maltraitoit quel- " quefois pour ses inconstances, et que sa bravoure effa- " rouchoit les autres galans, elle s'ennuyoit, et pour se " débarrasser de son amant, elle écrivoit au Cardinal qu'elle " lui avoit *ouï-dire, qu'il ne mouriroit jamais que de sa main.*" See La Porte's Mémoires.

denier was imprisoned in the Château de Loches for two years, reduced to the bread and food of the common prisoners, and afterwards kept in exile for seven or eight years, without prevailing on him to give in his resignation of captain of the guards to Anne of Austria, when her caprice, or that of Mazarin, insisted on his selling his commission, that they might bestow it on some other person. Madame de Sévigné and Bussy Rabutin both speak of his conduct as a great folly; and so it was. But what was the government that made it so? St. Evremond, who partook of the sentiments and character of the same period, had made a visit of three months to the Bastille, by the order of Cardinal Mazarin, for some jests at a dinner, which not daring to notice in the Duc de Candale, his vengeance fell on his companion. At the conferences on the peace of the Pyrenees in 1659, at which St. Evremond was present, he wrote an account of what was passing to his intimate friend, the Maréchal de Crequi. A copy of this letter was found in a box of papers deposited by St. Evremond with Madame du Plessis Bellievre (the friend of Fouquet as well as of himself), when St. Evremond accompanied the Comte de Soissons on his complimentary embassy to England at the Restoration. On Fou-

quet's imprisonment, St. Evremond's papers were seized with those of their mutual friends, and this letter — this *ex post facto* satire on a dead cardinal and a ratified peace, was represented in such odious colours to Louis the Fourteenth by le Tellier and Colbert, that St. Evremond, aware of the unfavourable impression already existing against him, and afraid of a second visit to the Bastille, deemed it prudent to retire, first into his native province of Normandy, and then into Holland, from whence he repassed into England early in the year 1662. From England he made many vain attempts to be restored with impunity to his own country, and to take some active part in its affairs. Born of a good family in Normandy, one of six sons, his father had destined him for the law, and educated him accordingly at the College de Clermont at Paris ; but at sixteen he entered the army, and was early distinguished by the Grand Condé, his contemporary, not more for his bravery than for his information, and for his talents in society. To Condé he soon attached his fortunes, was severely wounded at the affair of Nortlingen, under his command, and was afterwards sent by him to Mazarin to obtain the minister's consent to his future plan of campaign. His dismissal soon after from the lieutenancy

of Condé's guards does no honour to the prince. It would seem that he could not bear to suppose, that the keen observation of the ridicules of others, which had so often amused him in his companion, should ever be exerted in the observation of his own.

In the civil war which immediately afterwards ensued, St. Evremond was made a maréchal de camp in the King's army, and served in Guyenne under the command of the Duc de Candale. In the account which he gives of his military career we learn a curious fact, as to the constitution and the manner of payment of the army (even that of the King), during the regency of Anne of Austria. The officers were paid by assignments on the towns or communities occupied by their troops. By virtue of this assignment they took all they could get; and St. Evremond owns that during the two years and a half that he served in Guyenne, he brought back fifty thousand francs, "*tout frais fait.*" (1) Such an army must have been hardly less terrible to its friends than its enemies.

During St. Evremond's first residence in

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(1) Two thousand pounds sterling. See St. Evremond's works.

England, the ill success of all his attempts to re-establish himself in his own country threw him into such a state of melancholy and ill health, that in the year 1665, when the plague first began to manifest itself in London, he returned to Holland to try the effects of a change of air. — Here began that acquaintance with the Prince of Orange, which afterwards secured to him the friendship and protection of King William the Third, from whom he long received the pension of 300*l.* a year, which had been given him by Charles the Second. Few of the pensions bestowed by Charles were more honourable to his character and good taste than this to St. Evremond.

By the intervention of Sir William Temple, his minister at the Hague, he had invited St. Evremond back to England in the year 1670, and the delicate manner in which he secured to him the means of living there, relieved his pensioner from the unpleasant sentiment of receiving a salary from a foreign sovereign without either services received, or duties attached to it. Some little islands, forming a decoy for wild fowl, which have long since disappeared, in a canal in St. James's Park, which has long since undergone an entire alteration, were constituted by the King into a government, and St. Evremond,

by a regular commission, made governor of these "*Duck Islands*," with a salary of 300*l.* a year. This finally attached him to the court of Charles the Second, and, together with some little patrimony which he still possessed in France, gave him a sufficiency to indulge in the literary leisure in which he had taken refuge, when no longer allowed a part in more active occupations. His writings leave a very favourable impression of his mind and character, and, above all, of the charms of his society. His classical knowledge and general reading were uncommon for a man of the world in those days; and his knowledge of that world, his intimate acquaintance with most of the principal actors in it, and the active situations in which he himself had been placed, were still more uncommon in a man of letters. The leisure and the privations of his exile had forced him to the cultivation of his literary talents, and kept his Epicurean philosophy within the bounds of good order, which perhaps might not have been the case in prosperity, and in the country and the society to which he naturally belonged. His misfortunes seem to have enabled him to unite the qualities which he himself describes with such approbation: "Il n'y a pas de meilleur commerce qu'un Anglois qui parle, et qu'un François qui pense."

His society and conversation must have been as varied as they were agreeable; for the same man who had been a favourite companion of Charles the Second, was so pleasing to King William, that he was always named by him as one of the company when that King dined in any private house.

His works are much less read than they deserve, because most of them are addressed more to the society for which they were written than to the world, and are rather the lively observations of a man of letters than an investigation of the subject which he treats. His verses were all occasional, all called forth by some momentary impulse; but instead of the tameness and insipidity common to such productions, they mark in a peculiar manner the keen observation of character and of ridicule for which he was always distinguished, and have the charm of well-painted old portraits, of whose exact resemblance it is impossible to feel a doubt. (1) By his numerous letters and verses to Madame de Mazarin, although all in adulatory terms, we are admitted for the moment

(1) See his "*Dialogue entre le Vieillard et la Mort*," tom. iii. p. 115.; his "*Scène de Bassette*," and several other pieces.

into her society, and learn to pity the man, however sincerely attached to her, who was constantly exposed to her peculiarities, her weaknesses, and her violence.

Hortense Mancini, this spoiled child of fortune, after her wanderings in Italy, and her residence at Chamberry, had come to England five or six years after St. Evremond. Her pretext was a visit to the second wife of the Duke of York, who was by birth her cousin german. (1) The account she has given of her own life leaves us no doubt as to her character or her conduct. The eccentricities and the mad bigotry of her husband seem in some degree to have excused both, without justifying either. Although her uncle the Cardinal had made her the greatest heiress in Europe, the husband he had chosen for her complained bitterly (as Madame de Sevigné tells us) that Louis the Fourteenth had obliged him to allow her a thousand a year, and to give her five hundred pounds on her first separation from him, and her journey to Italy. So little were these means adequate to the extravagant habits in which she had been brought

(1) Mary of Modena, the second wife of the Duke of York, was niece to Cardinal Mazarin, daughter of his sister Martinozzi,

up, that a pension of four thousand pounds a year, allowed her by Charles the Second on her coming to England, never prevented her being overwhelmed with debts. On her arrival in 1676, the King had lodged her within the precincts of Whitehall, and she was considered for a time to have occupied his vagrant heart during the interregnum between the Duchesses of Cleveland and Portsmouth. Evelyn, we see, talks of her as the King's mistress, and Madame de Sevigné says of her, " Madame de Mazarin " court les champs de son côté, on la croît en " Angleterre, où il n'y a, comme vous savez, ni " foi, ni loi, ni prêtre ; mais je crois qu'elle ne " voudroit pas, comme dit le chanson, *qu'on eût* " *chassé le Roi.*"

Her house was soon the resort of all the foreigners then in England, and was one of the first where play took place regularly, as the entertainment of the evening. St. Evremond became immediately one of her most devoted admirers, and spent his life in her society. It is easy to imagine the resource it must have been to him, long deprived of the enjoyment of his native language, his early habits of society, and all the little details of social life, to which a residence in a foreign country often attaches with peculiar fondness.

His partiality for her became such, that we can by no means trust the following description : " Madame de Mazarin," he says, " n'est " pas plutôt arrivée en quelque lieu, qu'elle " y établit une maison qui fait abandonner toutes " les autres. On y trouve la plus grande liberté " du monde, on y vit avec une égale discrétion. " Chacun y est plus commodément que chez soi, " et plus respectueusement qu'à la cour. Il est " vrai qu'on dispute quelquefois, mais c'est avec " plus de lumière que de chaleur. C'est moins " pour contredire les personnes, que pour éclair- " cir les matières ; plus pour animer les conversa- " tions, que pour aigrir les esprits. Le jeu qu'on " y joue est peu considérable, et le seul divertisse- " ment y fait jouir. Vous n'y voyez sur les visages " ni la crainte de perdre, ni la douleur d'avoir " perdu. Le désintéressement va si loin en " quelqu'uns, qu'on leur reproche de se réjouir " de leur perte, et de s'affliger de leur gain. Le " jeu est suivi des meilleurs repas qu'on puisse " faire. On y voit tout ce qui vient de France " pour les délicats, tout ce qui vient des Indes " pour les curieux, et les mets communs de- " viennent rares par le goût exquis qu'on leur " donne." — *St. Evremond*, tom. iv. p. 238.

The gaming which he here talks of as a mere amusement was in fact the passion and occupation of her life, against which St. Evremond exerts

himself with all the ingenuous perseverance of real friendship. He attacks this pernicious propensity both in verse and in prose, both with wit and with reason; and his earnest desire to banish its excesses from the society in which he passed his life, has dictated many of his best occasional verses. In some he describes, with characteristic accuracy, the Basset players, who now filled her house every evening. In others he celebrates the charms of her parties, when otherwise constituted, and when the company of men of wit and letters admitted of literary conversation.

" Que sert à ces messieurs leur illustre science ?
" A peine leur fait-on la simple révérence ;
" Et les pauvres savans, interdits et confus,
" Regardent Mazarin, et ne la connoit plus.
" Tout se change ici bas, à la fin tout se passe,
" Les livres de Bassette ont des autres la place ;
" Plutarque est suspendu, Don Quichotte interdit,
" Montaigne auprès de vous a perdu son crédit,
" Racine vous déplait, Patru vous importune,
" Et le bon La Fontaine a la même fortune."

St. Evremond, tom. iv. p. 142.

But the mild philosophy of St. Evremond made as little impression on the mind as his steady attachment on the heart of Madame de Mazarin. Her character, naturally violent, unrestrained by any principle, uncorrected by any education, was steady to nothing but the indulgence of her own passions, caprices, and whims.

While overwhelmed with debts which *they* principally occasioned, she seems to have continued as wantonly lavish in the expenditure of money as when, she herself tells us, that with her sisters she amused herself by throwing handsful of their uncle the Cardinal's ill-gotten wealth out of the windows of the Palais Royal, to the populace below.(1)

The latter part of such a life may be anticipated, although she lived not beyond the age of 53. She had been more than once indebted to the economy of St. Evremond for the means of supplying her immediate wants. She died in a small house at Chelsea, where her body was detained by her numerous and importunate creditors, and not allowed to be transported to France, till an assurance was given by her son, that all their demands should be satisfied.

" Madame Mazarin's body is not yet gone " from a little house, which she rented of him " (Lord Cheney) at Chelsea; but there have been " many creditors at it to claim debts, which they " say her son writ to my Lord Feversham, to take

(1) " Un jour entr'autres que nous n'avions de meilleur " passe-tems, nous jettâmes plus de trois cent Louis par " les fenêtres du Palais Mazarin, pour avoir le plaisir de " faire battre un peuple de valets qui étoit dans la cour." *Mémoires de la Duchesse de Mazarin, Œuvres de St. Réal,* tom. vi. p. 28.

" care about her body for Gravesend, till he re-
" turned home to the Duke of Mazarin, who he
" had no doubt would satisfy all, and give
" directions for her funeral." (1)

St. Evremond did not survive the friend he so devotedly admired above four years. Her loss must have been severely felt by him. Habits of life and society of twenty years' standing could at his age neither be altered nor supplied. Such were with him their force, that he had before declined accepting the tardy permission he had at last received to return to France. That any government should have obstinately prolonged

(1) *Extract of a Letter from Gertrude Pierpoint, Marchioness of Halifax, to her Lord*, 28th *June*, 1699. Dev. MSS. The Duc de Mazarin, who long survived her, had her body embalmed, and, instead of burying, always carried along with him the remains of the person who alive could never endure him. The fate of Madame de Mazarin and her sisters seems as little what might have been expected *after* their deaths as during their lives. Mary Mancini, the Constabless Colonna, the admired of Louis the Fourteenth, who had *almost* been Queen of France, and who was married so illustriously in Italy, is buried in a small insignificant church at Pisa (La Madonna della Spina), where a large flat stone in the pavement says only, " *Mariæ Mancini* " *pulvis et ossa.*" In an inscription at the bottom of the same stone, her son the Cardinal Colonna tells us, that, by his mother's express injunction, no other inscription could be put on her tomb. No amplification certainly could have made it more impressive.

the exile of such a man, for such an offence, till an age at which a return to his native country was no longer desirable, gives a strong idea of the ignorance in which Louis the Fourteenth was kept by the malice or vindictiveness of his ministers, or their subalterns. St. Evremond's prolonged existence proved how little either had affected the happy equanimity of his mind; and he died at the age of ninety-two, having received from the friends he had acquired in England all the attentions during his life, and after his death all the honours, that could have been bestowed on him in the country to which he belonged.

With that country, however, and those friends, he kept up an uninterrupted correspondence, which the frequent intercourse at this time subsisting between the two countries, and the number of French visitors to the court of Whitehall, much facilitated. The Duc de Nevers, Madame de Mazarin's brother, a sort of *Grand Seigneur Bel-esprit*, was more than once in England. In the year 1680 we find him there at the same time with his cousin the Grand Prieur Vendôme, with the Duc de la Tremouille, and with the Marquis de Crequi; and in 1687 Marianne Mancini, the Duchesse de Bouillon, paid a visit to her sister, Madame de Mazarin, and to her cousin Mary of Modena,

then on the throne of England. The arrival of all these visitors from France must have formed very agreeable incidents in the life of St. Evremond, and maintained an interest in the society of his own country. His correspondence, too, with his contemporaries and with the associates of his youth was never dropped. To them he addresses the essays on various objects of taste and literature, which had formerly been the subject of their conversation, and the remembrance of which now amused his mind and occupied his leisure.

Among his letters to Ninon de l'Enclos, are luckily preserved several of her letters to him. They are remarkable for their good sense, good taste, and unaffected propriety of expression. These qualities, which we must suppose to have been at least as remarkable in her conversation as in her correspondence, can alone account, and scarcely account, for the intercourse she maintained with many of the most respectable women of her day; with Madame de Maintenon, with Madame de Coulanges, with Lady Sandwich, during her long residence at Paris (1), and with several others. This inter-

(1) Lady Sandwich was the daughter of John Wilmot, the too celebrated Earl of Rochester. At her desire, Ninon de

course, however (with the exception of Madame de Maintenon, who had always known her, and who, to their mutual honour, never dropped the acquaintance), must have taken place during the latter part of the long career of Ninon. We cannot suppose Madame de Coulanges receiving or visiting her while her cousin Madame de Sevigné, with whom she was living in uninterrupted intimacy and friendship, was justly complaining of the excesses into which Ninon had successively led both her husband and her son, or indeed while her age allowed her to continue the habits of life in which she had mis-spent her youth. In her more advanced years, spite of all the stories so often repeated of her having lovers at eighty, we see by her letters to St. Evremond, that she perfectly knew *how to grow old.* In her situation, a talent so singularly difficult must suppose a strong unsophisticated understanding, and much truth of character. She receives the gallant compliments which St. Evremond (with less good taste than she merited) still continues to bestow on her, as mere remembrances, and replies to them with

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l'Enclos had given her her portrait, which, at the death of Lady Sandwich, became the property of Horace Walpole Earl of Orford, and is now in the collection at Strawberry-hill.

sober good sense, and an expression of much steady attachment. After all, her existence in the society of her day must be considered as one of those odd anomalies in manners which by incalculable combinations of circumstances have sometimes taken place in all countries.

Had St. Evremond returned to France at the end of his long exile, in spite of his intermediate correspondence with individuals, he would probably have been much surprised at the altered tone which the developement of the character of Louis the Fourteenth had imposed on the nation. While Mazarin allowed him no part in the government of his kingdom, he rather encouraged his inclination to gallantry, and his taste for the gayeties and amusements of society; the more so, as the society immediately within the King's power, and what he most sought, was that of the Cardinal's niece, the Comtesse de Soissons, Olympia Mancini, married to a prince of the house of Savoy (1), and made superintendent of the household of the young Queen. Lodged in the palace, her apartment was the rendezvous of all the young and the gay of the court. A taste for conversation, for an ingenious turn of thought

(1) The Comte de Soissons was the eldest son of Prince Thomas of Savoy, uncle to the then young Duke of Savoy.

and of expression, for occasional verses, and a ritual of studied and arbitrary politeness, had already raised to celebrity the house of the Marquise de Rambouillet, which, Madame de Motteville tells us, "étoit le réduit non-seulement " de tous les beaux esprits, mais de tous les " gens de la cour." In the character which she goes on to give of Madame de Rambouillet, we see little to distinguish her from any other well-bred woman, loving the world, wishing to be always surrounded by a large society, sacrificing much to secure it, treating all the world alike as to their personal merit; but obsequious to those in power, and anxious of distinction at court. Her maternal feelings could not have been very lively, as of four daughters, three were made nuns, and one only, the much-praised Julie d'Angennes, appeared in the world.

The Poetical Garland, which bears her name, (1) was the contribution of all the wits that frequented the Hôtel de Rambouillet (2), of whom it gives no very high opinion. It was presented

(1) *La Guirlande de Julie.*

(2) The famous Hôtel de Rambouillet had been the house of a financier of the name of Rambouillet. It was situated at the extremity of the Rue de Charenton, and had a large garden which went down to the river. It had been called *La folie Rambouillet.* — *Mémoires de Courart*, p. 111. notes.

as an offering to the charms of the lady, by the Duc de Montausier, who, after a courtship of fourteen years, married her at the ripened age of thirty-eight. Why she remained so long obdurate to a passion which had been expressed in all the metres "of the babbling earth," no good reason seems to be given.

It was in these societies that Louis had early acquired (while all other instruction was denied him) those dignified manners, those attentions to women, and those rigorous forms of politeness, which helped afterwards to conceal his hard and self-indulging character. St. Evremond had left France so soon after the death of Mazarin, that he had never witnessed the king reigning for himself, and indulging in that taste for show and magnificence which succeeded in giving an impulse and direction to the character and taste of the country. His fêtes and tournaments, his buildings, both for public ornament and for individual enjoyment, served to produce in all the walks of art (from the genius of Molière to that of Le Nostre) authors and artists surpassing their age.

The assumed national dresses in the Carouzel, which took place in 1662; the band of Romans headed by the King, of Persians by his brother, of Americans by the Duc de Guise, bringing together no less than 600 persons, must have set to

work a host of artisans, and given an increased activity to all the manufactures connected with ornament and luxury.

This impulse must necessarily have often produced improvements in matters of more common and general use. The fêtes of Versailles in 1664 lasted a week; history and fable were ransacked for characters, which the favoured individuals of the court were themselves to personate. Thus a part of the entertainment of all depending on their exertions, and a part of the honour devolving on each individual well acquitting themselves, must have sharpened the wits of all:—we may suppose, too, that their adopted characters sometimes made them acquainted with personages of antiquity, and with traits of history, of which their very neglected education would otherwise have left them ignorant. It must have had the still greater advantage of bringing them into immediate contact with all the superior talents of their own day, to whom they were obliged to have recourse for the interest of their pleasures, and were indebted for the means of being able to amuse themselves. It is therefore rather from their effects on the future social life in France, than for their own well-known details, that these fêtes are here mentioned. Particulars of the entertainments of

a court must, in all times and in all countries, much resemble one another. Beauty and youth have always sought courts with eagerness, as one of the theatres of their many triumphs; have there produced their always-allowed claims, have been admired, envied, flattered, and forgotten.

But on these fêtes of Louis the Fourteenth, from the talents by which they were honoured, and from the subsequent celebrity of many of the assistants, the imagination dwells with peculiar interest, and, losing in the distance from which they are viewed all the heart-burnings and all the envy, all the vexations and all the fatigue by which they must have been accompanied, represents to itself with pleasure the commencement of the flattering triumph of la Valière,—a youthful monarch, impressed for the first time with a degree of that diffidence inseparable from real passion; who, instead of throwing the handkerchief with affronting security to the object of his passion,

> "Love's awful throne approach'd by just degrees,
> "And, as he would be happy, learnt to please."

Imagination pictures her timid eyes, unconscious of the secret they betrayed, riveted on the King, when, distinguished no less by his youth and manly beauty than by all the jewels of the

crown glittering on his dress and on the trappings of his horse, he led the brilliant band of knights who were to figure in the ensuing tournament. Thus opened the first day of the week of fêtes, during which a court of 600 persons were lodged and entertained at the King's expence, besides the whole host of artists, subalterns, and servants necessary for the preparation and attendance on these varied shows. We figure to ourselves Madame de Sevigné, yet young enough to have attracted admiration on her own account, totally occupied with that bestowed on her daughter. Mademoiselle de Sevigné first appeared at court the preceding year, and now made one of the performers in the ballets danced by the King, which formed a part of these entertainments. We see the delighted eyes of the happy mother following the object of her affections in the assumed character of a Shepherdess, of a Nereid, and of an Omphale, which fell to her lot in these exhibitions. The variety of costume in which they took place, gave scope not only to a display of the beauty, but of the grace and taste of the performers. Benserade celebrated the charms of Mademoiselle de Sevigné in verses hardly less complimentary to the mother than to the daughter. The talent of this court poet for bespoken verses and varied forms of adulation

was unrivalled; it was that of his day, and of the fêtes which called it forth. Of a very different nature were the dramas with which they were dignified by the genius of Molière. His *Princess d'Elide* was given on the fourth day of this week: it was full of allusions, now lost, to the sentiments, the interests, and the circumstances of the moment. The whole of the first scene between the young prince and his confidant evidently alludes to the state of the King's sentiments for Mademoiselle de la Valière, and takes pains (probably little wanted) to encourage him in the indulgence of his passion, and to convince him that the weaknesses of love were necessary to the character of an accomplished prince. Every succeeding evening produced a new piece of Molière's. The *Fâcheux* was given on the fifth day, the three first acts of *Tartuffe* on the sixth day, and *Le Marriage Forcé* on the seventh. If any other part of these entertainments equalled that of the theatre, they certainly have remained unrivalled, and deserved all the excessive admiration bestowed on them by their contemporaries.

Voltaire recalls this period of the life of Louis in the person of a disappointed stranger visiting Paris for the first time in later days, and no longer finding any remains of the magnificence

and the triumphs which he had heard extolled, and came to witness: —

" Quels plaisirs, quand vos jours marqués par vos conquêtes
" S'embellissoient encore à l'éclat de vos fêtes!
" L'étranger admiroit dans votre auguste cour
" Cent filles de héros, conduites par l'amour;
" Ces belles Montbazons, ces Chatillons brillantes,
" Ces piquantes Bouillons, ces Nemours si touchantes,
" Dansant avec Louis sous de berceaux de fleurs,
" Et du Rhin subjugé couronnant les vainqueurs.
" Perrault du Louvre auguste, élévant la merveille,
" Le Grand Condé pleurant aux vers du grand Corneille;
" Tandis que plus aimable, et plus maître des cœurs,
" Racine, d'Henriette exprimoit les douleurs,
" Et voilant ce beau nom, du nom de Bérénice
" Des feux les plus touchans peignoit le sacrifice." (1)

It is not the business of this work to follow Louis the Fourteenth from the fêtes and festivals of his youth, through the military pomps and pageantry of his riper years. They were all suggested by the same ideas of grandeur, the same love of show, and the same personal vanity. These ideas being common both to himself and to his people, were reflected back by the court which surrounded him, and combined into a species of enthusiasm which for a time usurped

(1) *Le Russe à Paris. Contes en Vers, Satires et Poësies mêlées.*

the place of every other, and obstructed the slow progress of more rational ideas. In his march through Flanders in 1670, he was followed by his whole court. He had hitherto always accompanied his troops on horseback; he now for the first time appeared to them in a coach with glass windows, then a very recent luxury.(1) Of these lumbering vehicles exact representations yet remain in the pictures of Vandermeulan. They contained six, eight, and sometimes nine persons, as all the royal family, in the first degree of affinity, in certain great ceremonies went together. (2)

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(1) Bassompierre had brought the first carriage with glass windows from Venice.

(2) They were still in use during the reign of Louis the Sixteenth, and the author remembers having seen the unfortunate Marie Antoinette incased in one of these clumsy conveyances when, in the year 1785, she went to Notre Dame to return thanks for the birth of the last ill-fated Dauphin. The same vehicle contained the Comtesse de Provence, the Comtesse d'Artois, Madame Elizabeth, the Duchesse d'Orleans, and the Princesse de Conti. The fatigue and ennui of her long passage through the crowded streets of Paris in such a carriage was not rewarded or lightened by a single note of applause from the surrounding multitude, nor one consoling expression of that admiration formerly lavished on her every public appearance. Separated from the King, who formed no part of the procession, the public seemed to profit by the occasion to evince to her individually, their altered sentiments.

In the carriage with Louis the Fourteenth, during his campaign of 1670, travelled the Queen with Madame de Montespan for her dame d'honneur, Madame (Henrietta of England), and *la grande Mademoiselle*. However the company might have pleased the King, we cannot conceive their being very agreeable travelling companions to one another. Madame de la Valière was still the reigning mistress, and it was on this occasion (the only one where she seems to have braved the Queen), that she ordered her postillions to leave the great road, and take a short cut over the open country, that she might arrive at head quarters before the court. (1)

On a second progress through Flanders in 1674, all attentions and honours, except those of mere etiquette to the Queen, were for Madame de Montespan, then in the zenith of her favour; and we know she was not of a disposition to conceal or to soften any of the advantages the King's passion gave her over her legitimate rival. Mademoiselle de Montpensier, again one of the party, mentions the jealousy and vexation of the Queen when on her road from Tournay to Amiens (where the court was ordered to wait

(1) See *Mémoires de Mademoiselle de Montpensier*, tom. iv. p. 197.

for the King), while stopping to dine she saw Madame de Montespan pass in a carriage of the King's, with four gens-d'armes sent from the army to escort her. Her journeys afterwards were made with something like royal attendance. Madame de Sevigné, who followed her on the road to the baths of Vichy in May 1676, says, "Nous suivons les pas de Madame de Montes-"pan; nous nous faisons conter par-tout ce qu'elle "fait, ce qu'elle mange, ce qu'elle dort. Elle est "dans une calêche à six chevaux, avec la petite "Thianges (her niece). Elle a un carrosse derrière, "attelé de même, avec six femmes. Elle a deux "fourgons, six mulets, et dix ou douze hommes "à cheval, sans ses officiers. Son train est de "45 personnes. Elle trouve la chambre et son "lit tout prêts; elle se couche en arrivant, et "mange très-bien." — *Lettres de Sevigné*, tom. iii. p. 418.

It is unnecessary farther to dwell on the often-told tale of the brilliant days of Louis the Fourteenth. Madame de Sevigné has adorned it with all the graces of her inimitable pen, and has often drawn from it reflections the more excellent, from being generally suggested as much by the heart as by the understanding. St. Simon has entered into its details with a caustic truth, rare from the mind of a devoted courtier; and

Dangeau has recorded the trifling incidents of every day, which often present much more to the mind of the reader than ever entered the head of their historian.

It is our business only to notice the change produced on the manners of the nation by the altered taste of the sovereign in his latter days. La Bruyère says of these times, comparing them with the past, " Le courtisan avoit ses cheveux, " étoit en chausses et en pourpoint, portoit de " large canons, et il étoit libertin. Cela ne sied " plus. Il porte perruque, l'habit serré, le bas uni, " et il est dévot." — *La Bruyère*, tom. ii. p. 225.

" L'exemple d'un monarque ordonne et se fait suivre :
" Quand Auguste buvoit, la Pologne étoit ivre ;
" Quand Louis le Grand brûloit d'un tendre amour,
" Paris devint Cythère, et tout suivoit la cour ;
" Lorsqu'il devint dévot, et ardent à la prière,
" Le lâche courtisan marmotta son bréviaire."
Œuvres de Frederick le Grand, Epître au Comte Hoditz.

The false policy and the bigoted observances which disgraced the latter part of the reign of Louis the Fourteenth, seem to have been more the effects of an ignorance which was imposed on by others, than any predispositions of his own to persecution. His language on these matters, in his advice to the Dauphin, written under his dictation by Pelisson, and published in the compilation which bears the name of *Les Œuvres de*

Louis Quatorze, breathes a very different spirit from that of the revocation of the edict of Nantes (1); and his refusing to comply with the violences continually suggested to him by le Tellier against the Cardinal de Noailles, the virtuous Archbishop of Paris, although he concurred in every lesser act of vexation towards him, proves weakness rather than malevolence in a character armed with absolute power. (2)

The same weakness which made him thus treat the man of whom he had said, when removing him from the see of Chalons to that of Paris, that had he known a more deserving or

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(1) " Il me semble, mon fils, que ceux qui vouloient " employer des remèdes extrêmes et violens, ne con- " noissent pas la nature de ce mal, causé en partie par la " chaleur des esprits, qu'il faut laisser passer et s'éteindre in- " sensiblement, plutôt que de la rallumer de nouveau par une " forte contradiction, sur-tout quand la corruption n'est pas " borné à un petit nombre connu, mais répandu dans toutes " les parties de l'état; et d'ailleurs, les réformateurs " disoient vrai visiblement en plusieurs choses. Le meil- " leur moyen pour réduire peu-à-peu les Hugenots de mon " royaume étoit de ne point presser par aucun rigueur " nouvelle contre eux."

(2) " Le Roi l'accabloit de tous les dégoûts qui auroient " terrassé un prêtre courtisan; mais quand on lui parloit de " la déposé, de l'enlever, et de l'enfermer, il éprouvoit plus " de trouble que le pieux archevêque objet de ses ménaces." — *Histoire de France pendant le Dix-septième Siècle*, tom. i. p. 84.

more virtuous prelate, he should not have preferred Noailles; the same weakness made him neglect Catinat because he was a protestant, employ Vendôme, who was a notorious profligate without either religion or morals, and sign the revocation of the edict of Nantes.

Le Montey observes, that the existence of Louis the Fourteenth may be divided into two parts, his heroic and his subjugated life. Immediately after the death of Mazarin, his conduct had risen far above what was expected from his natural talents, and the disgraceful neglect of his education; while, in the latter half of his life, his character and conduct seem to have been prematurely enfeebled.

His robust health, his insensibility to excesses of heat and cold, and his power of supporting fatigue, which were as remarkable as his other personal endowments, were broken in upon by a painful disorder before he was fifty. — "Avec "la santé disparurent les victoires, les amours, "et Montespan; avec les infirmités arrivoient "les dragonades, le Jansenism, les confesseurs, "le crédit des bâtards, l'obsession de la gou- "vernante, les intrigues de la veuve Scarron. — *Monarchie de Louis Quatorze*, p. 412.

This *veuve Scarron*, in spite of all the abuse inevitably excited by the remarkable caprice of

fortune which converted *la veuve Scarron* into the wife of Louis the Fourteenth, appears to have been naturally neither a very ambitious nor a very narrow-minded woman. The extraordinary circumstances in which she was placed, made her both: the first from having been elevated to almost regal power, the second from being a proselyte in religion. The effect of this last circumstance is avowed by herself in a letter to Madame de Frontenac about the year 1680. "Ruvigné est intraitable, il a dit au roi que j'étois née Calviniste, et que je l'avois "été jusqu'à mon entrée à la cour. *Ceci* "*m'engage à approuver des choses fort opposée* "*à mes sentimens.* Il y a long tems que je n'en "ai plus à moi." — *Lettres de Madame de Maintenon*, tom. i. p. 77.

Her character meanwhile retained much of the good derived from the difficulties and indigence in which she had passed her youth. The friendly intercourse she never ceased to maintain with several persons, whose intimacy and protection she had shared in times which a more ordinary character would have wished to forget, says much both for her heart and her understanding. That heart and understanding must be pitied, when placed in a situation, however elevated, which punished every feeling of

the one, precluded every enjoyment of the other, and exposed to public unpopularity, with no consolation but the cold gratifications of ambition.

She had supplanted an imperious and provoking rival; she had satisfied the scruples of her conscience; she had succeeded to a more complete dominion than any of her predecessors over the will and opinions of One whose breath was still power, and whose favour was fame. Yet is the sincerity of her repeated and earnest expressions of ennui and melancholy not to be doubted. She had attained a situation which *she* could not, and which nobody *would* have abandoned; of which she speaks as a sage, while often acting in it like a timid and short-sighted woman. — Of all persons, she must have felt the most, that courts confer not that happiness which they prevent those accustomed to them from finding elsewhere.

The task of which she complains, of amusing a being no longer amusable (1), must have fallen heavy on the mind of her who could, in absolute indigence, and without any assured means of subsistence, write on the subject of a marriage then proposed for her in the following terms to Ninon de l'Enclos, who might

(1) " D'amuser un être, qui n'est plus amusable."

be supposed not to entertain very scrupulous ideas of the sentiments necessary in such a connexion. " Mars 8. 1666. Dans l'état où je " suis, je ne saurez me dire trop souvent que " vous approuvez le courage que j'ai eu, de m'y " mettre. — A la Place Royale, on me blâme; " à St. Germain, on me loue; et nulle part on " ne songe ni à me plaindre, ni à me servir. — " Que pensez-vous de la comparaison qu'on a " ose faire de cet homme à Mr. Scarron? — O " Dieu! quelle difference! Sans fortune, sans " plaisirs, il attiroit chez moi la bonne com- " pagnie. Celui-ci l'auroit haï et éloigné. Mr. " Scarron avoit cet enjouement que tout le " monde sait, et cet bonté d'esprit, que presque " personne ne lui a connu. Celui-ci ni l'a, ni bril- " lant, ni badin, ni solide: s'il parle, il est ridicule. " Mon mari avoit le fond excellent. Je l'avois " corrigé de ses licences. Il n'étoit ni fou ni " vicieux par le cœur, d'une probité reconnue, " d'un désintéressement sans example. C * * " n'aime que ses plaisirs, et n'est estimé que " d'une jeunesse perdue. Livré aux femmes, " dupe de ses amis, haut, emporté, avare, et " prodigue — au moins, m'a-t-il paru tout cela." *Lettres de Maintenon*, tom. i. p. 38.

The melancholy reverses of the latter part of the reign of Louis the Fourteenth; his army

beaten, his finances ruined, his cities and country depopulated, not only by war, but by the more destructive hostility of religious persecution; were alone sufficient to account for a cessation of that magnificence, of those fêtes, and of the disposition to indulge in them, which had so long blinded both himself and his people to the evils he was accumulating on their heads. Still, however, an habitual and imposing pomp surrounded his court. An habitual respect was entertained for him; an habitual remembrance of his past triumphs, and an habitual obedience to his will. These might have prolonged, in his own eyes, the vision of his infallibility, had not his interior life been tormented by the interminable quarrels of Jesuits and Jansenists, and the little concord existing between the confessor and the wife, to whom he alternately applied for worldly consolation and spiritual security. He saw his family dying around him, and witnessed within one year the loss of the three next successors to his throne. Another death, which took place at the same time, was yet more immediately destructive of his interior comfort.

The Dauphine, Duchess of Burgundy, seems to have been the only member of the royal family from whom he received those delightful attentions, and in whom he encouraged that

perfect familiarity and freedom of mind, which allows the gaiety of youth to communicate something of its exhilarating spirit to the failing senses of age.

Her apparent frankness, her childish tricks, and the liberties she took in his presence, some of which must have been those alluded to by a distinguished English writer on this period, when he professes omitting the details of many habits of Louis the Fourteenth and his family as "too indelicate for the perusal of the humblest class of English readers" — it must be in the highest, and not the humblest class of readers in any country, where forgiveness can be hoped for any childishness, any nonsense, or any tricks, however little consonant with propriety, which could relieve for a moment the intolerable ennui that age, etiquette, the satiety of pleasure, and the melancholy sameness of magnificence, had accumulated on the head of Louis the Fourteenth. To his selfish character, therefore, the death of the Duchess of Burgundy must have been more felt than that of her husband and their child, or that of his own son, which immediately preceded or followed it. Of the first Dauphin (known by the name of *Monseigneur*) the insignificance and nullity of character were so great, and his dulness on all subjects so

profound, that not even the interested activity of a cabal of intriguers, who surrounded the heir of a king of past seventy, could raise him either into activity or into notice. " On le trouvoit pendant " des journées entières couché dans son lit, ou " bien il se traînoit sur une chaise, une canne à " la main, dont il frappoit ses souliers sans mot " dire. Enfin, il restoit des jours entiers assis et " immobile, les yeux fixés sur une table, une des " coudes appuyés dessus, se bouchant des mains " les deux oreilles, et vécut plusieurs années, " père du Roi d'Espagne, et fils de notre Roi, " sans qu'il eût l'idée, ou la hardiesse, d'employer " le crédit qu'il devoit avoir auprès de l'un et " de l'autre, pour obtenir la moindre grâce. — *Mém. du Duc de Richelieu*, tom. i. p. 113.

This eldest son of the King of France, this father of the King of Spain, died at Meudon, unlamented and unthought of by any body, but half a dozen intriguing women, who had got possession of his passive mind and person.

Of the Dauphin Duke of Burgundy it is impossible to believe all the bad, or all the good, reported of him. Le Montey remarks, " Ce " Prince qui avoit reçu des passions violentes, " et une éducation sainte, épuiser tour-à-tour les " excès qui peuvent produire des causes si " contraires." — *Monarchie de Louis Quatorze*,

p. 444. And it is perhaps lucky that he died in time to preserve the wholesome idea that education can perform the miracles it was supposed to have done in his case.

But the feelings excited by all these deaths were envenomed to the King by the horrible suspicion, that they had occurred, not as a dispensation of Providence, but by poison, and that poison administered by one of his own family. This was continually urged, by the ignorance, as well as by the private interests of those about him. And credit should be given to the King for trusting to the opinion of the single one of his medical advisers who declared against the supposed poison, as much as to the adviser who was bold enough, in such circumstances, to maintain such an opinion against all his colleagues. (1)

The rigorous winter under which the whole of Europe had suffered in the year 1709, was succeeded in France by a famine, which uniting its dreadful effects to the depopulating victories of Marlborough and Eugene, reduced that country to the most lamentable state of internal misery. While Europe was still admiring the gilding, the statues, and the fountains of Ver-

(1) Maréchal, who was surgeon to Louis the Fourteenth.

sailles and Marly, the armies of France were recruited from a starving population, which sought bread more than honour under her standards. The memoirs of Dangeau (too good a courtier to dwell willingly on the subject) are full of reports of risings in the provinces, and partial riots in Paris, from mere starvation, and the impossibility of procuring the means of existence. Mention is likewise made of a circumstance which shows that to excess of misery was joined excess of misgovernment. All the regiments in the towns of Flanders and Alsace successively mutinied, from being obliged by their officers to take bread from the commissaries of the army at a higher price than they could obtain it in the market, and were only pacified by money being distributed among them. (1)

In these disastrous circumstances, Louis the Fourteenth was indebted to the ignominious terms offered to him by his triumphant enemies, for calling forth a vigour of mind and a dignity of conduct, which he had hitherto only shown on trifling occasions, and to an idolizing court. When the allies proposed in 1709, as the only terms on which even a truce was to be granted,

(1) *Le Monley*, Suppressed Paragraphs of Dangeau, p. 272.

that he should within two months join their arms to drive his own grandson from the throne of Spain, he encouraged his starving population to further exertions and to prolonged sufferings, by declaring that he must ever prefer making war on his enemies rather than on his own children; and that if his armies continued unsuccessful, he was determined, in spite of his age and infirmities, to put himself at the head of his nobility, and die in the field. The feelings of Frenchmen still responded to this language from their sovereign; and in spite of another successful campaign of Marlborough, and the battle of Malplaquet, their devoted bravery, and the success of Villars against Prince Eugene at Denain, saved France from the immediate invasion which was meditated by the allies.

From this time to the death of Louis the Fourteenth, within five years afterwards, the universal and bigotted devotion of the court betrayed its hypocrisy. The old and grave were, or pretended to be, occupied with religious controversies, which recalled those of the last years of the western empire. The young were eagerly anticipating a reward for present restraints, in the expected gaiety of a new reign, and the licence of which the character of the Duke of Orleans had already given assurance.

CHAPTER VI.

THE CHANGE OF MANNERS WHICH TOOK PLACE IN ENGLAND AFTER THE REVOLUTION OF 1688.—KING WILLIAM.—QUEEN MARY.—THE AMUSEMENTS AND HABITS OF SOCIAL LIFE DURING THE REIGNS OF KING WILLIAM AND OF QUEEN ANNE.—DUCHESS OF NORFOLK'S DIVORCE.—DUCHESS OF MARLBOROUGH.—LADY MASHAM.—QUEEN ANNE.—LADY BETTY GERMAINE.—DUCHESS OF QUEENSBURY.—LADY M. W. MONTAGUE.—BOLINGBROKE.—POPE.—SWIFT.—STEELE.—GAY.—PRIOR.—CONGREVE.—DEGRADED STATE OF THE FINE ARTS.

THE changes which took place in the social existence of France, during the long reign of Louis the Fourteenth, occupy a period which in English history extends from before the restoration of Charles the Second to after the accession of the house of Hanover (1); and it is as remarkable for the different conduct and sentiments of the two nations, as any period of their preceding civil wars.

From the momentary delirium of the Restoration the English nation (now long accustomed

(1) From 1660 to 1717.

to think on subjects of government) soon recovered. The popish plot on the one side, and the arbitrary measures of domestic government which immediately followed on the other, soon convinced both parties that nothing had been done by either to secure what all had been fighting for. The Revolution of 1688 ensued, in which few things are perhaps more commendable, or less borrowed from the character of our neighbours, than the leaders of that revolution having wisely contented themselves with abandoning as little as possible the established order both of government and of succession, and rallying as much as possible to settled institutions; satisfied with real securities, instead of apparent differences.

The change in social life and manners was of a much more evident nature. The early years of William had been past in a country, and in circumstances, not favourable to the formation of a popular character. Born at the end of seven months, in an apartment yet hung with black for the death of his father and the execution of his grandfather, his health and organization were languid and feeble. He lost his mother when only ten years old, and was then left almost in infancy in the hands of the popular faction of his country, which was neither friendly to him-

self, his family, or its pretensions. Thus early deprived of the tenderness of parents, and of that first cultivation of the heart which can seldom be received from strangers, he was called, at the age of twenty-two, to head the armies of his country, in an occasion of peculiar danger and despondency. The whole of his after life seems to have received a decided impression from these circumstances of his early youth.

His steady and unshaken mind, and great military talents, were called forth and perfected by the extraordinary difficulties in which he was placed; while his naturally sedate and serious nature, and his acquired reserve, precluded his possessing any of the engaging attributes of youth. Even the persons the most aware of his virtues, lamented their cold, inattractive complexion. He had no taste for literature, or the fine arts, either by nature or cultivation; his clumsy addition to the collegiate magnificence of Cardinal Wolsey at Hampton Court, was a poor and ill-judged imitation of the grandeur of Versailles, in a country where the expenditure was to be granted by votes of parliament, and not depending on the will of the prince. William abhorred show as much as Louis loved it, and was soon disgusted by the enormous charges of

a Jacobite board of works, who thought all fair that could be extorted from a Whig government. His only science was that of mathematics, so far as was connected with military affairs. For dissipation he had no time, and no turn for amusement: hunting was the only pastime of his leisure hours, and to that his partiality seems to have arisen, as a means of relieving him from the necessity of idle discourse, for which he had neither taste nor talents. His first visit to England, in 1677, certainly could not contribute to rub off his habitual reserve, convinced as he was that his principles, his views, and his opinions, were all equally adverse to those of his uncles. His marriage with the Princess Mary had as little effect on him: she possessed not sufficient character of her own to influence his. Aware of his infinite superiority of understanding, she implicitly subscribed to his will, and by so doing in the great and difficult moment of the Revolution, avoided much of the odium that would have attached to her: the usurper of her father's throne became thus the passive and obedient wife of his conqueror.

Her good sense in decidedly resisting the offer that was made her while yet in Holland to support her separate and sole right to the crown, and her sincere attachment and high

opinion of William, were in fact her chief merits. She had no enlarged views or ambitious ideas that could have justified a more decided political conduct, and she wanted those lively feelings and that expansion of character which would have given relief to her supposed sacrifices, and have rendered doubly interesting the secondary situation she had imposed on herself. She was of lazy habits and a slow understanding, naturally addicted, though not successful, in her application, to minute concerns. An account-book of hers, while Princess of Orange, is yet extant, in which she meant to have set down every little item of the disbursement of her monthly allowance of pin-money. But the sum to be accounted for, though by no means large, is never made out; yet she always goes beyond it, and then regularly, at the end of every month (when the Prince it would seem was to pass the account), makes him a written apology for her inaccuracy, begs he would forgive her, promising to be more exact for the ensuing period, and in one instance, hoping she might count on his justice, in case she died, making good the difference to her servants. Her letters to William while in Ireland during the campaign of 1690, prove her sincere and even jealous attachment to his person, and her anxiety to

please by an implicit devotion to his will. They show, too, that she had adopted much of his habitual reserve to the persons about her, necessary perhaps in those uncertain and treacherous times. She says, " I go to Kensington " as often as I can for change of air; but then I " can never be quite alone, neither can I com- " plain: that would be some ease; but I have " nobody whose humour and circumstances " agree enough with mine to speak my mind " freely to; besides, I must hear about business, " which being a thing I am so new in, and so " unfit for, does but break my brains the more, " and not ease my heart." She has before declared that she never does any thing now without thinking he may be in the greatest danger. " And yet I must see company on my set days, " I must play twice a week, nay, I must laugh " and talk, though never so much against my will. " I believe I dissemble very ill to those who know " me; yet I must endure it: all my motions are " watched, and all I do so observed, that if I eat " less, or speak less, or look more grave, all is " lost, in the opinion of the world; so that I have " this misery added to that of your absence, and " my fears for your dear person, — that I must " grin when my heart is ready to break, and talk

" when my heart is so oppressed I can scarce " breathe."(1)

The sufferings of persons placed in the most brilliant and envied circumstances are here forcibly recalled to us, and the misery of all situations so exalted as to preclude the comforts of confidence and sympathy. That Mary should have allowed herself to be persuaded by any arguments of supposed necessity, on her first arrival in London, to enter with a laughing countenace the palace at Whitehall from which her father had fled but a few days before; that she should have run about with an idle curiosity from room to room (which even her panegyrist Burnet allows to have been the case) proves a want of all individual character, perhaps as much as a want of feeling. Her being induced to bespeak the Spanish Friar for the play at which she made her first appearance at the theatre, can only be attributed to her having been misled by persons as ignorant as herself, or perhaps treacherously seeking to place her in an odious light.(2) Her quarrel with her sister Anne proves they were equally without any elevation of sentiment. But Mary possessed the power,

(1) Appendix to Macpherson's Memoirs, vol. ii. p. 166.

(2) Note from Lord Nottingham's Letters in Macpherson's Memoirs.

and therefore ought to have been the most placable.

Her death, at the age of thirty-three, was more politically than individually regretted. All the time-serving part of the nation, whose renunciation of King James was not grounded on the true footing of his forfeiture of the throne from misconduct, were deprived of their only excuse, —that of having transferred their allegiance to his eldest legitimate heir. Those whose principles as well as conduct had deeply involved them in the measure of inviting over the Prince of Orange, must have trembled for the shock it was likely to give to his authority. And the clergy of the church of England, many of whom seem to have dreaded the supposed Calvinistical prejudices of William almost as much as the Popish propensities of James, thought themselves deprived of their only protection in the orthodoxy of the Queen.

The superiority of William's character and measures, and the solid good sense of the English people, in duly appreciating what he had secured to them, were perhaps never more evident than in his retaining quiet possession of the crown, after the death of her, in whom his only right (except that of conquest) was centred.

It was the people in whom these opinions

were the most strongly grounded. In an account given to James's ministers, by a person sent on purpose to sound the general disposition of the English towards his return at this period, the writer says, that he had certainly more friends than enemies among the upper orders of the people, on account of the heavy taxes and other grievances. This the writer concludes from the indulgence shown to Jacobites by the lieutenants of counties, justices of the peace, &c. and from the conversation of the gentlemen all over the country. "But for the common people, "they are still venomous, and the magistrates "in most corporation towns round the nation "no less malignant. They own their present "burthens very heavy, yet profess openly, that "they would rather carry it on and on, than let "Popery, by restoring the King, steal in upon "them; and when asked how they can read the "King's last declaration, and observe the pro- "mises therein made, and yet doubt either of "the establishment or tranquillity of their own "church, they answer that, being certain some "of these promises will be broke, they find "reason to doubt whether any of them will be "kept." (1) Of the unpopularity of William

(1) Macpherson's State Papers.

with the upper orders of society he was himself well aware, and was sometimes disgusted with the manner in which it was enforced to him by the conduct of parliament. The Duke of Shrewsbury tells Lord Somers, in a letter written soon after the dismissal of the Dutch guards, that the King had mentioned to him (the Duke of Shrewsbury) a design he had had of leaving England, "soon after he came over, occasioned "by something that had gone wrong in the "first parliament, and speaks with uneasiness of "the King's second design to go away, when "the guards were taken from him." (1) The court of two persons of the characters of William and Mary was not likely to have been very gay, even if the circumstances attending their having mounted the throne had not formed a revolution in manners still greater than in government.

All the sober part of the nation from moral reasons, all the Whigs from political principles, all Protestants from aversion to Papists, all

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(1) These words are copied from a letter of Mr. Charles Yorke (the Chancellor's son) to his brother, Sir Joseph Yorke, giving an account of his examination of Lord Somers's papers, at Bellbar, in 1742. The papers were afterwards almost all unfortunately burnt at a fire in Mr. Yorke's chambers in Lincoln's Inn.

united in abhorrence of the manners of the late court; for the court, at the period of which we are speaking, still exercised an authority in manners, an importance in the country, and a national consideration, which ceased soon after the Bill of Rights had defined exactly its powers, and the little that court could or could not do. All social communication between the courts of France and England, all adoption of her fashions or amusements, likewise ceased, or became suspected. None of the numerous French who had visited England during the reigns of Charles and James remained, except those whom the revocation of the edict of Nantes had exiled on account of their religion. The Duchess of Mazarin was still detained by her debts, in spite of King William having generously continued to her the pension of 4000*l.* a year which she had first received from Charles; and St. Evremond was now too old to avail himself of a permission to return to a country which had so long rejected him.

The religious education and sober habits in which both William and Mary had been brought up, made their court immediately assume an appearance of much decency and regularity of conduct. The short and distracted reign of James could hardly be separated, either in man-

ners or morals, from the twenty licentious years which had preceded it. The stage, we find, had neither reformed its language nor its precepts; for some of our most defective comedies in these particulars, as has been before observed, date from the first ten years after the Revolution. This became a sufficient reason, why, when more refined manners and a better taste in morals prevailed, the theatres ceased to be a popular amusement in the upper ranks of society, and justified the neglect of them which continued during the early part of the last century. Several distinguished singers having visited this country during the reigns of Charles and James, a taste had been acquired for Italian music: it was now about to be established in a theatre exclusively dedicated to it, and patronised by the nobility and the good company of London, as a less exceptionable entertainment than the national theatre. It certainly had no chance of corrupting either the heart or the understanding, neither of which were at all called into action at these exhibitions.

"Mrs. Tofts, a mere Englishwoman, in the "part of Camilla, courted by Nicolini, an Italian, "without understanding a syllable each other "said;" Mrs. Tofts chanting her recitative in English, in answer to his Italian; "and, on the

" other hand, Valentini courting amorously in " the same language a Dutchwoman, who could " neither speak English nor Italian, and com- " mitted murder on our good old English with " as little understanding as a parrot, could in- " terest nothing but the eyes and ears. "(1)

These particulars may give us some idea of the strange incongruities which accompanied the infancy of the establishment of the opera in London. No wonder that, in the beginning of the next reign, Steele and Addison exerted themselves to recall the public taste to the English stage. They had both of them endeavoured, by example as well as precept, to purify it from that alloy of coarseness of sentiment and of expression which debased the otherwise sterling and incomparable comedies of Congreve, Vanburgh, and Farquhar. In the Tatler and Spectator they strove to lead the public taste towards admiring such pieces as The Haunted House, The Conscious Lovers, Grief à la Mode, &c. &c. If a coarse thread is still sometimes found traversing the tissue of their dialogue, we feel sure it was a compromise between the yet unsettled taste of the day and the purity of that of the authors.

During most part of the reign of King William,

(1) See Chetwode's General History of the Stage.

the young and active in the upper orders of society, those who must always give the tone to it, were so occupied, either directly or indirectly, with the political and religious parties, which still existed in the country, that they had little time for the quiet amusements of literature, and no need of fictitious excitements.

Whig and Tory, Papist and Protestant, were then designations which struck so home to the interests, to the honour, and even to the life of those distinguished by them; so much depended on their triumph or defeat, and their ulterior success was yet so uncertain, that every lively feeling of the gay and thoughtless, and every serious speculation of the cautious and wise, must have been concentrated on these subjects. They pervaded the whole mass of society. Every thing connected with literature or the arts, and every trifling incident, received a colour from the party that was supposed to favour or to oppose it.

Of the strong impression permanently made, by the circumstances of this period of our history, we may best judge by observing that even now, when *Whig* and *Tory* are become mere names for two modifications of political opinion, both admissible in our well-poised government; when *Papist* and *Protestant* are become mere differences of creed, unconnected with any political

inferences; when the whole bearings of these questions are so entirely changed, that the protection of religious toleration, now claimed by the Whigs, was then exclusively the doctrine of the Tories; that even now, the former ideas respecting religious differences still remain engraved so forcibly on a great portion of the public mind.

Taverns and coffee-houses were then the rendezvous of the men, for the discussion of business, as well as convivial motives. A house had been opened for making and selling coffee as early as the year 1652, by a Greek servant of Sir Nicholas Crisp, a Turkey merchant, whom he had brought to England with him. During the Protectorate, and probably till the Restoration, coffee-houses, if they were much increased in number, were merely places in which coffee was to be found by those who happened to like this new beverage. Immediately after the Restoration, however, they rapidly multiplied, and soon became the separate resort of societies of persons united in the same pursuits, or sentiments, or pleasures.

They thus supplied the place of the various clubs we have since seen established. Although no exclusive subscription belonged to any of these coffee-houses, we find, by the account which Colley Cibber gives of his first visit to

Will's in Covent Garden, that it required an introduction to this society not to be considered as an impertinent intruder. There the veteran Dryden had long presided over all the acknowledged wits and poets of the day, and those who had the pretension to be reckoned among them. The politicians assembled at the St. James's coffee-house, from whence all the articles of political news in the first Tatlers are dated. The learned frequented the Grecian coffee-house in Devereux Court. Locket's in Gerard Street Soho, and Pontac's were the fashionable taverns, where the young and gay met to dine; and White's and other chocolate houses seem to have been the resort of the same company in the morning. Three o'clock, or at latest four, was the dining hour of the most fashionable persons in London; for in the country no such late hours had as yet been adopted. In London, therefore, soon after six, the men began to assemble at the coffee-house they frequented, if they were not setting in for hard drinking, which seems to have been less indulged in private houses than in taverns. The ladies made visits to one another, which, it must be owned, was a much less waste of time, when considered as an amusement of the evening, than now, as being a morning occupation.

Every body going out much at the same

time, we may suppose they were, as now, lucky enough often to miss each other. When they did not, or when they met by agreement, Quadrille and Ombre were the amusement of the evening. Games of chance, and the high play at Bassette and at Loo, of which the court had set the example during the reign of Charles, ceased with his life, or took place only on New-year's day, while a public ball continued to be given at court on that festival. James and his Queen continued evening drawing-rooms; and Queen Mary, as we see by the letters to King William already quoted, received her immediate court twice a week, and twice a week had evening drawing-rooms, at which she played at Ombre or Quadrille. After the embarrassing circumstance which took place at the first visit she made to the theatre, we are told that she avoided making a second, although a day had been appointed for that purpose; an ill-counselled measure, which must have been a triumph to all the Jacobites, and seemed to tell the public that, according to the proverb, she had taken *the cap that fitted her*. "The only day her Majesty gave herself "the diversion of a play, and that on which she "designed to see another, has furnished the "town with discourse for near a month. The "choice of the play was the Spanish Fryar,

" acted June 1689, the only play forbid by the " late King. Some unhappy expressions among " these that follow put her in some disorder, " and forced her to hold up her face, and often " look behind her, and call for her palatine and " hood, and any thing she could next think of; " while those who were in the pit before her " turned their heads over their shoulders, and " all in general directed their looks towards " her whenever their fancy led them to make " an application of what was said. * * * * * " But however the observations then made " furnished with talk till something else hap- " pened, which gave as much occasion for " discourse; for another play being ordered to " be acted, the Queen came not, being taken up " with other diversions." (1)

Great societies of persons in private houses on set days, or by invitation, since distinguished by the names of routs, drums, or assemblies, had not yet commenced; nor were balls an entertainment given by individuals, except at the great holidays of the church, and on occasion of marriages. This ceremony was conducted in a very different manner from what the delicacy of

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(1) Letter of Lord Nottingham. See *Macpherson's Memoirs*, vol. ii. *Appendix*, p. 78.

later times has prescribed. The bride and bridegroom then were, or were supposed to be, among the gayest of their gay associates, collected to witness their happiness. No retirement carried them away from the immediate congratulations of their friends; and a series of dinners, with every member of the families on both sides, followed directly the wedding-day, and kept them in a course of festivities which, to many couples, must have been a bad introduction to the sober dulness of their ensuing life. In the detailed account given in the Diary of Mr. Pepys of the marriage of Lady Jemima Montague, daughter of the first Earl of Sandwich, to Mr. Carteret, in 1665, the admiration he bestows on the extraordinary decency and gravity with which the whole business was conducted shows us how much our ideas on this subject are changed, and the great difference in manners, which then admitted of marriages "*twenty times* "*more merry and jovial.*" (1)

(1) After they returned from church, he says, "All sa- "luted her, but I did not, till my Lady Sandwich did ask "me whether I had saluted her or no. So to dinner; com- "pany divided, some to cards, others to talk. At night to "supper, and so to talk, and, which methought was the most "extraordinary thing, all of us to prayers as usual, and the "young bride and bridegroom too; and so after prayers

Bear-gardens and bowling-greens still supplied a means of gambling to the men. To the bear-garden we find Mr. Pepys accompanying his wife, and meeting other ladies there. They continued frequented by gentlemen even unto the days of Pope, who, describing two brothers of different habits, says,

" F—— loved the senate, Hockley-hole his brother,
" Like, in all else, as one pea's like another."

At Hockley-hole, in the neighbourhood of Clerkenwell, was a sort of amphitheatre dedicated to bear-baiting, bull-baiting, &c. Of the amusements of this place we may judge by the following advertisement in the reign of Queen Anne (1709): " At the Bear-garden near Clerken-" well-green. This is to give notice to all gen-" tlemen gamesters and others, that on this " present Monday is a match to be fought by

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" soberly to bed, only I got into the bridegroom's chamber " while he undressed himself, and there was very merry " till he was called to the bride's chamber, and into bed " they went. I kissed the bride in bed, and so the curtains " drawn with the greatest gravity that could be, and so " good night; but the modesty and gravity of this business " was so decent, that it was to me, indeed, ten times more " delightful than if it had been twenty times more merry " and jovial." — *Pepys's Diary*, vol. i. p. 357.

" two dogs, one from Newgate-market against
" one from Honeylane-market, at a bull, for
" a guinea to be spent; five let-goes out of hand:
" which goes fairest and fastest in, wins all.
" Likewise a green bull to be baited, which was
" never baited before; and a bull to be turned
" loose with fireworks all over him. Also a
" mad ass to be baited; with a variety of bull-
" baiting, bear-baiting, and a dog to be drawn
" up with fireworks. To begin exactly at three
" o'clock." (1)

Newmarket, too, which had been much patronised and constantly frequented by Charles and his brother, was visited even by William, the year after the Revolution, certainly more as a sacrifice on his part to a popular and national amusement than to indulge a taste of his own, which could never have been cultivated in his earlier years.

Among the women, the principal scenes of gaiety at this time, and in which they sought relief from the stiff formality of London visits, and the sameness of eternal card-playing were occasional jaunts to wells and watering-places. Of these, Bath and Tunbridge are the only ones that have still preserved the reputation of their

(1) Harleian Catalogue, 5931. in fol.

healing powers. Of the many others formerly in the neighbourhood of London, such as Epsom, Highgate, &c. all credit for their salubrity seems to have vanished with their fashion as a place of public resort. Epsom Wells, of which a half-destroyed row of little stunted pollards on a bare common now alone marks the site, was once a place of such gay renown as to have been chosen for the scene of one of the comedies of the day.

Of the life of Tunbridge we have a detailed account in certain homely verses preserved in the collection calling itself "State Poems." (1)

We are told that they repaired to the wells soon after break of day, then to the chapel as now, close by the fountain, then to smoke a pipe before breakfast: —

> "For this design appointed places are,
> "Lest smoking on the walks offend the fair."

Then to breakfast *on tea:* afterwards a pipe is again mentioned, as an agreeable way of passing time to avoid gaming, which many do,—then to the market, which is described —

> "Close by the wells, upon a spacious plain,
> "Where rows of trees make a delightful lane;"

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(1) See "*Tunbridgalia, or the Pleasures of Tunbridge, by* "*Mr. Peter Causton, Merchant,*" Poems on State Affairs, vol. i. p. 202.

and it is said to be stored with every delicacy, and plenty of fish from Rye. Then they again drink the waters, and again take a pipe, by way of a whet before dinner. After dinner, they go to bowls or nine-pins: —

> " Here 's choice of bowling-places to be seen;
> " But Rusthall is, by far, the finest green —"

or cards or chess are played at, or reading is recommended, *Horace* or *the Bible*, till the cool of the evening invites them out to walk; when,

> " ——— to close the lovely scene,
> " Each night there 's constant dancing on the green.
> " Persons of highest rank stick round the ring,
> " Lustre and grace to the diversion bring,
> " While lads and lasses forth in pairs advance,
> " Music keeps time to the well-measured dance."

The fairs held periodically in and about London, and the theatres, sights, and shows exhibited at them, were then frequently visited by all the best company of London. Lady Russell mentions her sister Lady Northumberland and Lady Shaftesbury returning from Bartholomew fair, loaded with fairings for herself and children. May fair was just about this time established. It commenced on the 1st of May, and continued for fifteen days after-

wards. It was held by a grant from James the Second, for the benefit of Henry Lord Dover and his heirs for ever. But it soon became such a resort for the idle, the dissipated, and the profligate, that it was presented as a public nuisance in the reign of Queen Anne, 1708, and finally abolished the next year. The ground on which it was held was soon covered with the buildings now called Shepherd's Market and its environs. Of the amusements of this fair while it lasted, we have the following account quoted in an extract from a MS. letter of Mr. Bryan Fairfax (1) in 1701.

" I wish you had been at May fair, where the " rope-dancing would have recompensed your " labour. All the nobility of the town were there, " and I am sure even you, at your years, must have " had your youthful wishes, to have beheld the " beauty, the shape, and activity of Lady Mary " when she danced" — (a rope-dancer, called the famous Dutchwoman, see Grainger's Biographical History). " Pray ask Lord Fairfax about

(1) Mr. Bryan Fairfax was the publisher of the Memoirs of Thomas, Lord Fairfax, called " *Short Memorials of* " *Thomas, Lord Fairfax, written by himself.*" This curious memoir is reprinted in " *Select Tracts relating to the Civil* " *Wars in England, in the Reign of King Charles the First,*" collected by Baron Maseres, and published in 1815.

" her, who is not the only lord by twenty who " was every night an admirer of her while the " fair lasted. (1) Then was the city of Am- " sterdam well worth your seeing; every street, " and every individual house was carved in " wood, in exact proportion to one another. " The stadt-house was as big as your hand; the " whole, though an irregular figure, yet that you " may guess about ten yards in diameter. Here " was a boy to be seen: within one of his eyes " was *Deus meus* in capital letters, as Gulielmus " is on half a crown; round the other he had in " Hebrew 1771; but this you must take as I did, " on trust. I am now drinking your health at " Locket's, therefore do me justice in Yorkshire."

" B. F."

The church must be considered at this time as one of the principal public places, which the youth of both sexes equally frequented, where they constantly met, and where, therefore, we

(1) In Lord Lansdowne's Epilogue to the Jew of Venice is the following reference to this Lady Mary the rope-dancer: —

" 'Tis Shakspeare's play, and if these scenes miscarry,
" Let Gorman * take the stage or Lady Mary."

* A noted prize-fighter.

may suppose they sometimes went as much for this purpose as for any other. In the Spectator and Guardian we find frequent mention made of young gentlemen first seeking to attract the attention, and mark their admiration of young ladies, by frequenting the same church, and placing themselves in an opposite or contiguous pew. The contending sects and religious differences which had distracted England for the last fifty years had put every body on the alert, not only as to their profession of faith, but as to the minute observances of the rites of their particular church. All the young and the gay, all those living the most in the world, all went regularly to church twice every Sunday, at all the great festivals of the church, and on every prayer and every saint's day; all those devoutly inclined, or wishing to be thought so, attended public prayers every morning and evening. Lent was still observed in all regular families on Wednesdays and Fridays, and we are now speaking of members of the church of England, much less rigid as to the observances of its followers than any of the sectaries. In the appendix to Reede's Life of Tillotson, we learn that Tillotson, while a young man at Cambridge during the Protectorate, "generally heard four sermons every "Lord's day, besides the weekly lectures at

" Trinity Church on Wednesdays(1);" and we know the uncontrolled length of the presbyterian service, and their severe observance of the sabbath, even unto this day.

Shopping in the times of which we are speaking, as in our own, seems to have been called in aid by the female world for the occupation of their time. It was attended with somewhat more of interest and excuse than in the present day, where every street presents in every window all that the varying productions of fashion or commerce can offer. At that time, our manufactures of luxury and ornament had by no means attained their present excellence. France was then, and with much more reason than now, resorted to for every article of finery and ornament in dress. After the return of the Duke and Duchess of St. Alban's from France, in 1698, with a magnificent wardrobe, King William was importuned to prevent the importation of such clothes from France, to protect and encourage our own manufactures: but our trade to India then brought to England a variety of eastern productions which no imitations had yet rivalled, and to which no others could compare. The silks, the chintzes, the porcelain, the lacquer-

(1) Appendix to Reede's Life of Tillotson, p. 398.

ware, and the toys of China, were the admiration of Europe. When the India ships arrived in the Thames, it was no uncommon thing for the ladies to go down to Blackwall, and make purchases on board. Madame de Mazarin, we learn from St. Evremond, was particularly eager about these expeditions. The India houses often mentioned in the comedies and poems of the times were no other than warehouses dealing in all the importations of China. They were in the east end of the town, and seem to have been the only retailers of these commodities. The use of tea was then so recent, and so confined, as to occasion no great importation of it; it was a fashionable luxury, and was only to be found at these India houses: there, in a back room behind the warehouse, a kettle was always kept boiling, to try the tea before it was purchased. Parties were common among the young and gay to these India houses, where raffling took place, as a means of disposing of some of their most costly articles, and of facilitating the purchase of others. (1) Such parties we may suppose some-

(1) The fashion of raffling at the jewellers and great toy-shops continued to a much later date, as we see that Lady M. W. Montague says in one of her Town Eclogues,

"At Corticelli's he the raffle won."

times served as an excuse for meetings which could not have taken place unobserved elsewhere. Such, at least, was the reputation (whether well grounded or not) which they acquired. In the letter of Lord Nottingham already quoted an account is given of Queen Mary having visited all these India houses, partaking of the raffling going on at them, and having dined at the house of a milliner of no good repute, as we are to understand by a coarse reprimand which is said to have been given by King William to the Queen for this party. (1) That the reprimand was given, the broad words still admitted in the colloquial language of those days allow us to believe; but it could only be to the prejudiced mind of an inveterate Tory that it could appear otherwise than a good-humoured and rather a gallant way of taking up the circumstance. Had the education of women at this

(1) "She dined at Mrs. Graden's, the famous woman in "the Hall that sells fine ribands and head-dresses; from "thence she went to the Jews that sell India things, to "Mrs. Ferguson's, De Vett's, Mrs. Harrison's, and other "India houses. These things, however innocent in themselves, have passed the censure of the town; and besides "a private reprimand given, the King gave one in public, "saying to the Queen, that he heard she dined at a b—— "house, and desired the next time she went, he might go "too." Letter of Lord Nottingham, *Macpherson's Memoirs.*

time been less neglected, and had their minds been opened to a greater variety of interests, we should say that the distribution of their time and of their lives was more likely to have contributed to the rational enjoyments of society than at present. Fashion had not then issued what a distinguished female writer has justly called "her most arbitrary decree," that of ordering every body to be present *every where*. Dissipation was not then a business, even among the most dissipated. The circle in which every one moved was so much smaller, and generally so much more intimate, that from society much might have been gained had any previous preparation made it possible. But from the company of mere housewifes, the men soon retreated to their coffee-houses and taverns, and endeavoured to supply by excess in wine that deficiency of gaiety and cheerfulness, which can alone be found in society, where both sexes contribute their appropriate share. The women were left to find occupation in their household business, and amusement in cards and vulgar gossipings on the character, conduct, and circumstances of their neighbours. Time so spent must have reduced all natural abilities to nearly the same level: few were found below, and still fewer above it. Thus Swift we see accusing the

whole sex of gross ignorance, idleness, and every bad disposition of mind arising from them, although no man of his day knew so many exceptions to his own decisions, nor so little deserved the credit he obtained by them. But Swift professing himself to be a Whig, and selling his abilities to the Tories, and Swift treating with contempt the whole female sex while he was courting and abusing the confidence of two distinguished women, equally deserves that reprobation which his popular talents have too much averted from his memory. We are obliged to the correspondence of Swift for our better acquaintance with several of his female contemporaries, who might have given him very different ideas of the sex from those he thought fit to entertain. Through the whole of the Journal to Stella, he hardly notices any woman of his society in London but those immediately connected with the politics of the day. As the families to which they belonged were Whig or Tory, they are called *drabs*, as in the case of the Duchess of Marlborough and her daughters; or they have no fault "but too much tenderness" of disposition, as in the case of Mrs. Masham, of whom this worthy Christian pastor always speaks well, *except* when she left the Queen's ear for a couple of days, to watch her dying child at

Kensington, which he considered as an unpardonable dereliction of duty. Lady Orkney he calls "the wisest woman he knows," because, as he asserts, her advice had been of use to Harley in his elevation to power. Except on this occasion, Lady Orkney's claim to superior wisdom appears to have rested on the French proverb, "Que c'est une brave femme qui ne fait pas "parler d'elle," which merit she seems to have possessed, even when in the difficult situation of the favoured friend and supposed mistress of King William.

In fact, the women whom the political circumstances of those times had lifted into public notice were by no means distinguished characters. The Duchess of Marlborough owed her power and celebrity, not to any natural endowments of her mind or understanding, which seem to have been of a very vulgar and ordinary nature, totally uncultivated by education. She wrote and spelt like a chambermaid. No habits of business nor acquaintance with the world gave her the means of expressing even her anger with dignity, and no experience of politics the power of looking beyond the narrow views of a party. The author has had access to a correspondence between her and the ambassador Earl of Stair, in the year 1741, when he

was retired to Scotland, and she was confined to her house in London by infirmity. In this correspondence she marks all the virulence against the measures and the person of Sir Robert Walpole that she could have felt for Harley and Mrs. Masham, and predicts the immediate ruin of the country from the councils of Walpole, as surely as she might have been excused for doing at the dismissal of her own lord. She never soars above the view that any lady of the bed-chamber might take of the political administration of any country in which she had never acted a distinguished part. The Duchess of Marlborough's power had consisted in the Queen's weakness; the public consideration to which she rose, to her lord's great abilities, his extraordinary services, and his entire affection and confidence in her. It is worthy of remark, that every detail of the private life of these two persons, which has since been laid before the public, raises our idea of his character, which had been traduced by a powerful and triumphant faction, and sinks hers, which in fact owed its celebrity to the same cause. Such as she was, she was considerably above the level of Queen Anne. We are told that at her accession to the throne, she had already lost all sentiments of confidential friendship for the Duchess of Marl-

borough. Swift says, " There was not perhaps " in all England a person who understood more " artificially to disguise her passions than the " late Queen." (1) If so, the cowardly treachery of her conduct was duly punished, by obliging her for eight years to suffer all that the imperious temper of the Duchess of Marlborough could inflict on a person no longer attached to her, and in whom there could in fact be no sympathy of feeling. The narrow, impenetrable understanding of Anne, and her obstinate illiberal mind, absolutely required to be governed, but to be governed by something as near as possible to her own level. This she found in Mrs. Masham. Even Swift's subservience to her, while the Queen's favourite, extorts little praise of her. Although she seems always to have obeyed the dictates of her prompter Harley, in being very sufficiently attentive to Swift.

But it is not among the favourites of kings or queens, or the dabblers in the doubtful politics of the day, that we are to look for those who redeemed their sex from the general charges brought against them by Swift. With Lady Betty Germaine his acquaintance began when he

(1) " *Memoirs relating to the Change in the Queen's Ministry.*" Swift's Works, Scott's edition, vol. iii. p. 325.

was chaplain to her father, Lord Berkeley, in Ireland, and continued uninterruptedly on her part, to his death. She seems to have been a person of excellent abilities, much liveliness, and capable of the most steady, disinterested friendship. Her answer to Swift's letter, basely abusing her friend, Mrs. Howard, for not, as he conceived, having forwarded his interest with Queen Caroline, is remarkable. It has the advantage of his as much in logic, reasoning, and expression, as it has in sentiment and good feeling. We must regret that more of Lady Betty Germaine's letters are not preserved, as they all bear the marks of a lively, unaffected, intelligent mind; sufficiently cultivated by education, and ripened by the world, and the habits of good company. Her steady devotion to her friends she had occasion to evince, in no common manner. Lady Betty had married, not early in life, Sir John Germaine, the same person on whose account the Duke of Norfolk had obtained a divorce from his wife, Lady Mary Mordaunt, the daughter and heiress of an earl of Peterborough, uncle to him celebrated by Pope. This lady dying without children, left the whole of her estates to Sir John Germaine. Sir John's successes with the fair sex were certainly owing to very different qualifications from

those of Swift; for he was so remarkably illiterate, and oddly ignorant, that it is known he left by will a legacy to Sir Matthew Decker, a great Dutch merchant in London, who had written on trade, as believing him to be the author likewise of St. Matthew's Gospel. How much he wanted all early instruction on the subject of the inspired writers may be judged by his saying to his wife, after having received the sacrament, at her earnest desire, during his last illness, "Betty, *that thing* you made me take has done "me no good." Sir John Germaine was by birth a native of the Low Countries. He was what was then called a soldier of fortune; one who considered the military profession as the means of existence as well as of glory, and whose advancement depended as much on their success in the world as on their military talents. Having left the whole of the estates that he received from Lady Mary Mordaunt to his widow, Lady Betty Germaine, she, having no children of her own, bequeathed them to the second son of her intimate and attached friend, the Duchess of Dorset, on condition of his taking the name of Germaine, by whose descendants these estates are now enjoyed.

The Duchess of Queensbury is another of Swift's correspondents, whose letters convey a

high idea of her charms and superiority. The friendly and liberal protection which she and her husband the Duke of Queensbury afforded Gay, and their unfeigned regret at his death, have left an amiable picture of their hearts. The Duchess retained till her death, at the advanced age of more than eighty, all the liveliness of mind and activity of person which she had possessed when celebrated by Prior as "*Kitty beautiful and young.*" (1) The author of these pages remembers to have seen her walking with the Duke but a short time before her death, and remembers the lively impression made by her still tall, upright, active figure; her silver locks without powder, combed carelessly about her face under a small hat, which did not conceal the remains of a beautiful clear complexion, and large, dark, animated eyes, partaking of no mark of age. She had always used the privilege of a beauty, in not observing the dictates of fashion in her dress. In her later life, her great peculiarities both of appear-

(1) Catherine Hyde, youngest daughter of Lawrence Hyde, Earl of Rochester, by the Lady Harriet Boyle, fifth daughter of the first Earl of Burlington: she was thus granddaughter to the Chancellor Clarendon, and cousin to Queen Anne.

ance and manner, and the rules she laid down for those admitted to her society, were respected and complied with by all the youngest and gayest persons of the day. An invitation to her balls was considered by them as a flattering preference. Had such meetings been as numerously attended then as at present, she would have been called on too often to exercise a certain figurative manner in which she indulged herself of clearing away guests, whom she found importunate or remaining with her too long, — that of sweeping about them with the fire-broom, which expressed, by an image hardly to be mistaken, a desire to get rid of them. — Horace Walpole's lines left on her table, on finding her out airing in her carriage, during one of the last years of her life, seem to have echoed the expression of general feeling for her :

" To many Kitties Love his car
" Does for a day engage ;
" But Prior's Kitty, ever fair,
" Retains it for an age."

On the whole, therefore, notwithstanding the abuse of Swift and the satires of Pope, we may rather wonder how many women at this period were distinguished by their worth and abilities, and how few forced themselves into unseemly

notice, while entire idleness of mind and of time was still the lot of all those whose rank and riches placed them above the necessity of taking an active part in their own households. The long-established domestic habits of the country, and the influence of the new court on the fashion of the times, seem in some degree to have prevented idleness from realising the proverb and being the parent of vice. But one trial for divorce occurs during the reigns of William and of Anne — that of the Duchess of Norfolk before mentioned. Many circumstances of this lady's case show how much the ordinary habits of life were overstepped, and what precautions were thought necessary previous to such misconduct. A house taken at Lambeth, then a small and little frequented village, whose nearest communication with Westminster was by a horse-ferry. This house, hired and resorted to under feigned names, and occupied by foreign servants, who, it was supposed, could not identify the lady, are not measures taken in a country where the crime they were meant to conceal was frequent. Thus we find no other instance of conjugal infidelity brought before parliament for seven-and-twenty years from the above-mentioned trial of the Duchess of Norfolk in 1697, to that of Lady

Annesley in 1723, a longer interval than has since occurred.

Another very distinguished female belongs to this period, Lady Mary Wortley Montague. (1) Of all her contemporaries she has left the greatest proofs of her claims to rank with the liveliest wits of her age. The embassy in which she accompanied her husband to Constantinople four years after their marriage, gave her opportunities of knowledge and information rare to her sex. Her noble birth and connexions opened to her all society in her own country. Her natural abilities and literary turn made her seek that of its most distinguished members. With these she lived in a constant interchange of talent, while, at the same time, she was immersed by taste as well as by situation in all the dissipation her rank, sex, and age led to in the general society of the world. Her lively comments on this society in her letters to her sister Lady Marré, prove with what a quick, observing, intelligent eye she viewed its follies, its affectations, and its weaknesses. Too happy had her own character entirely escaped their

(1) She was the daughter of Evelyn Pierpont, Duke of Kingston, by Mary Fielding, daughter of the Earl of Denbigh; born at Thoresby in 1690, married to Edward Wortley Montague in 1712, died at the age of 72, in 1762.

contamination. Her *Town Eclogues* could hardly have been written by a person who had not participated in the follies she describes, and lived with the persons she characterizes. She admirably marks the passing peculiarities of evanescent fashion on the unaltering stock of human nature. The characters in these Eclogues were all persons of the society in which she lived; but they are treated without any coarse or cruel personal satire. They are the sketches of individuals, but describe a whole species.

The Epistle from Arthur Grey, in point of poetry, perhaps, the first of her works, is subject to the heavy charge of having justly offended an intimate friend, by giving additional publicity to an odious and offensive attempt of which she had been the object. A drunken footman of Lord Binning's had entered the bed-room of his sister-in-law Lady Murray (a grand-daughter of the first Earl of Marchmont). (1) The man was tried and condemned for the attempted

(1) This lady was the daughter of George Baillie, Esq. of Jerviswood, and the Lady Grisell Home, the eldest of eighteen children of Sir Patrick Home, afterwards Earl of Marchmont. She left behind her a very interesting memoir of the lives and characters of her father and mother, which, together with some explanatory matter, and a little notice on the life of their author, was printed lately by a

assault. Female delicacy as well as female sympathy should have prevented Lady Mary from allowing her poetical imagination to adorn this coarse and disgusting canvas with all the lively colouring of real and delicate passion; and friendship should have made her desirous

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gentleman in Edinburgh, distinguished for his literary taste and accomplishments, and has since been published. The extraordinary escapes and adventures of the two families to which Lady Murray belonged, during their imprisonment and exile in the disturbances in Scotland at the end of the reign of Charles the Second, would interest even in a romance. They are here recounted, from their own report, in the simplest and plainest language by their daughter. The character of this daughter, from the little account here given of it by her editor, and by many contemporary testimonies, seems to have been worthy of such excellent parents, and to have been very justly appreciated both by the world and by her friends. The circumstance adverted to in the text had the effect that was inevitable on her intimacy with Lady Mary Wortley Montague, which the latter was very desirous to remove, for Lady Murray was a distinguished person in the first society of London: "Her "uncommon beauty, her graceful and courtly air, the fas- "cinating sweetness of her manners, her gaiety of temper "and sprightliness of conversation are traditionally remem- "bered." So says the well-informed editor of her memoirs. In the letters lately published of Mary Lepel, Lady Hervey, there is a character of Lady Murray, traced by the hand of friendship, with an intensity of sorrow for her loss, honourable to her who felt as well as to her who inspired such feeling.

of avoiding every thing that could perpetuate in the mind of Lady Murray any trace of so extraordinary and painful an adventure. More than female delicacy is offended in her *Letter to Mr. Chandler*. The licence of its pictures of supposed happiness would hardly become the pen of a man, and are unpardonable from that of a woman, in spite of all the graceful fancy with which they are drawn.

Her Correspondence from Constantinople, the most popular of her works, will always be read with pleasure, notwithstanding the vast increase of detailed information we have since received on all subjects relative to that country. Her epistolary style has hardly been surpassed. A great body of her unpublished letters to members of her own family is still in their hands. It is to be hoped, instead of destroying what at present there may be objections to publish, that at some future time, and under proper restrictions, the public may not be deprived of these letters, nor the memory of their writer of a further claim to celebrity for various talents and great superiority of intellect.

The adulatory letters of Pope to this lady, after making all deductions for the complimentary taste of the age, will not allow us to justify his subsequent abuse of a woman, whom he had

professed *so* to admire; and his infirmities as well as his genius and her own good taste, should have secured him from her coarse retaliation. Swift she seems wisely never to have admitted into her intimacy, although in her letters to Pope we find her admiring his wit and enquiring after his works.

The whole of the latter part of Lady Mary's life was spent on the Continent, where the residences she made in various parts of Italy contributed to give a higher opinion of the abilities than of the conduct of her countrywomen. Her correspondence with her daughter the Countess of Bute, during this latter period, shows an excellent understanding improved by the world and by observation, and contains admirable hints on the education of her grandchildren. But her dryness on all subjects connected with the heart and feelings, and her complaints of the absence of all friendship in those with whom she lived in her several changes of residence, are a melancholy addition to the long list of proofs that nothing but the virtues of the heart can secure to any woman a comfortable and respected existence in old age.

Of the many eminent men who at this period formed a part of what has been affectedly called the *Augustan age* of England, none seem to

have been more distinguished for social talents than Lord Bolingbroke. His letters present to us a profoundly thinking mind, of general information, graceful expression, and equally calculated to treat the lightest and the most serious subjects. His false and pernicious ideas, either in politics or religion, form no part of the present view of his character. In the inflated language of Johnson, speaking of his posthumous works, he is said "to have charged a blunderbuss "against the immortal happiness of mankind, "but wanting courage to fire it, had left Mallet "(his executor and editor) half a crown to draw "the trigger." The total neglect into which the philosophical discussions of Bolingbroke have long fallen, prove how much the zeal of Johnson had magnified their importance. All his contemporaries, from the cynical Swift to the courtier Chesterfield opposed to him in party, agree in their opinion of his unrivalled abilities, and the charm of his familiar intercourse. Swift declares him to have "a strong memory, a clear "judgment, a vast range of wit and fancy, a "thorough comprehension, an invincible elo- "quence, with a most agreeable elocution." (1)

(1) *An Inquiry into the Behaviour of the Queen's last Ministry.* Swift's Works, vol. vi. p. 7. In a letter to

Chesterfield says, " Lord Bolingbroke has both " a tongue and a pen to persuade; his manner " of speaking in private conversation is full as " elegant as his writings. Whatever subject he " either speaks or writes upon, he adorns it with " the most splendid eloquence; not a studied " laboured eloquence, but such a flowing happi- " ness of diction, which (from care perhaps at " first) is become so habitual to him, that even " his most familiar conversations would bear the " press without the least correction, either as " to method or style. If his conduct in the " former part of his life had been equal to all his " natural and acquired talents, he would most " justly have merited the epithet of all- " accomplished. * * * * And take him as he " now is, the character of *all-accomplished* is

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Stella of the 3d of November, 1711, he says, " I think " Mr. St. John the greatest young man I ever knew; wit, " capacity, beauty, quickness of apprehension, good learn- " ing, and an excellent taste; the best orator of the House " of Commons, admirable conversation, good-nature and " good manners, generous, and a despiser of money. His " only fault is talking to his friends, in way of complaint, " of too great a load of business, which looks a little like " affectation; and he endeavours too much to mix the " fine gentleman and man of pleasure with the man of " business."

" more his due than any man's I ever knew in " my life. (1)

In the early part of his career he entered into all the coarse profligacy which was then common, and permitted, even in the highest ranks of society. He seems to have aimed, in the words of his friend Pope,

" To shine a Tully and a Wilmot too."

Swift often mentions in his Diary the dissipation and late hours of St. John preventing his seeing him on business. An old Mr. Mildmay, who died within the remembrance of many persons now alive, had been in his early youth appointed his private secretary. In a previous interview with St. John, he was desired by him to delay entering on his functions on the day at first proposed, because he, the Secretary of State, recollected that on that day he should be *exceedingly drunk*. The dissipation of our time has at least taken a less degrading character. In his subsequent life, his frequent visits to France, and his second marriage to a niece of Madame de Maintenon's, had given him a familiarity with the language, manners, and society of the Conti-

(1) Chesterfield's Letters, vol. ii. p. 289.

nent, which began by this time to be again rare among the best company in England.

Political prejudices, and fears of the dethroned family, again operated to alienate us from our nearest neighbours. The exile thought necessary of such men as Bolingbroke and Atterbury was not calculated to allay these fears. The sons of the gentry were for the most part educated entirely at home. To those who were permitted to travel, a visit to the Continent was hurried over, as dangerous to the young man's religious and political principles. Nothing but the astonishing powers of mind, and various talents recorded of St. John, could have allowed him, during the turbulence and agitation of his political life, to have continued the cultivation of letters, and to have occupied himself with speculations so foreign to those of his ill-judging ambition. Perhaps no passage of his life places him in so amiable a light as his undeviating friendship and constant affectionate intercourse with Swift and with Pope; with Swift, after he had ceased to be the tool of his party; and with Pope, who he knew never had and never would be the tool of any party. Why the sincerity of the sentiments of these three distinguished persons should be doubted by their biographers, and reduced to a mere commerce

of vanity and compliments, can only be accounted for by an excess of the calculating spirit of the age; a spirit which denies the existence of any lively sentiments not founded on direct worldly interests. If these worldly interests are considered on a sufficiently enlarged basis, the author agrees in the opinion, that the most romantic friendship, wherever it may be supposed to exist, can be nothing more than a commerce of mutual benefits expressed and understood. It has been said only to take place between equals; but this is not a fair statement; for persons unequal both in mental endowments and in adventitious circumstances of fortune or situation, may be able to maintain this commerce with perfect independence, and great mutual advantage. The decisions of a profoundly-thinking mind may be thus exchanged for the brilliant sallies of a lively imagination; that knowledge of the world and of human nature, acquired only by penetrating and observing characters, for the affectionate support and confidence of gayer and less reflecting minds; a power of arrangement and turn for business, for the lively animated intercourse of a highly-cultivated intellect, without the same habit of affairs: by these means securing that reciprocity of real services, the only equality which friendship absolutely requires. St. John

thus supplied to the poetical mind of Pope the idea and outline of his most beautiful moral poem (1); and Pope's society, his admiration and attachment to St. John, and the communication of his works, helped, in the retirement of Dawley, to render more supportable his political disappointments, and the successes of Walpole. The natural infirmities of Pope, his deformity, and the weaknesses attendant on it, incapacitated him from the bustle of the world in general, and made him avoid society, where he was not well known, and where the powers of his mind had

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(1) If any one cavils at this epithet, applied to the Essay on Man, the following extract from the earliest of Pope's biographers will, it is believed, set this matter at rest with every candid mind, as to the intention and views of the author: — "Pope's Essay on Man is a real vindication of "Providence against libertines and atheists, who quarrel "with the present constitution of things, and deny a future "state. To these, *he* answers, that *whatever is, is right;* "and he assigns the reason, that we see only a part of the "moral system, and not the whole. Therefore, these irre-"gularities serving to great purposes, such as the future "manifestation of God's goodness and justice, they are "right. On the other hand, Lord Bolingbroke's Essays "are a pretended vindication of Providence against an ima-"ginary confederacy between divines and atheists. * * * * "In a word, the poet directs his reason against atheists and "libertines, in support of religion; Lord Bolingbroke against "divines, in support of naturalism." — See RUFFHEAD's *Life of Pope.*

not long obliterated the impression made by the distorted frame attached to it. Conversation and intercourse of friends, however, were his chief resource and relaxation. He loved, too, the society of women, although his person absolutely precluded the possibility of his inspiring those sentiments he may be supposed to have felt for them. In his intimacy with the family of Blount, his neighbours, during his early residence in Berkshire, it is to be regretted that the sister of that family, whom he distinguished by his particular regard and attachment, should have partaken so much of the petulance felt, more or less, by all young women, as to the pretensions of those by whom they are admired. The doubts expressed by the late editors of Pope's works, as to the nature of his connexion with Martha Blount, it is believed, would have vanished, had they seen, as the author of these pages has, a very melancholy and interesting letter from Pope to another member of the Blount family, lamenting that the affectionate regard he had always felt for all the sisters, and the pleasure he experienced in their society, seemed so little participated, and to inspire no return on their part. They probably had laughed at Martha for her conquest, and ridiculed the idea of a *lover* in the shape of Pope; while she

was blinded, or was insensible to the immortality which poetry *only* can bestow on a woman.

The peculiarities of Swift, and his affected roughness, must have made him oftener individually entertaining than generally agreeable. His social success in England seems to have depended chiefly on his political services and renown. In Ireland, he owns to Pope having surrounded himself with persons who gave into all his humours, and adopted his taste for literary trifles and nonsense: with these he endeavoured to beguile his disappointed ambition, and what should have been, and probably was more difficult, — the reproaches of his own conscience for all the domestic happiness he had destroyed for himself as well as for others. Whatever political principles he might have first imbibed, and whatever he might call himself, a Tory he ever was, in mind, character, and conduct, — a cold, selfish, imperious Tory. It has often been observed, that nobody is completely condemned, but by their own evidence; thus, his letters to Stella give the clear and unequivocal means of judging his character and his principles, both in his political and private life. In his politics, he abandoned the party of his falling friends, the Whigs, when they could no longer serve him; and such friends as Addison, Steele, and Garth! —

he vows vengeance against the Treasurer, Lord Godolphin, because he received him with coldness(1); and calls Lord Somers a "false, deceitful rascal," because he wrote an unsuccessful letter of recommendation of Swift to Lord Wharton, when he was lord lieutenant of Ireland. (2) His own account of his first introduction to Harley and St. John proves with what coarse and common phrases of flattery he allowed himself to be attached to their rising star, and to dedicate his great abilities, as a party writer, to the support of principles which he had formerly disavowed, and often to the exaltation of characters which his professions of morality ought to have taught him to condemn. In the mean time, he endeavours to satisfy the mean pride of his own mind by rough manners, and an exaction of much attention from his new patrons. Several quarrels, or rather affronts, are recorded in these letters, in which the apologies necessary to satisfy his insolent disposition are always readily made by the ministers, who saw through the man they had to deal with, and were too wise to quarrel with weaknesses, by which they could so

(1) Letter, September 9. 1710.
(2) Letter, January 14. 1711.

easily wield his abilities to their purpose. (1) Sometimes he seeks to prove his independence by refusing to dine with the Secretary of State, without naming his own company: sometimes by giving his voice to exclude the Lord Keeper and Lord Treasurer Harley from a club of which he says, "we take in none but men of wit, or "men of interest; and if we go on as we be-"gin, no other club in this town will be worth "talking of." This club was, as he tell us, "among other things, to advance conversation and "friendship, and the members were to call one "another, in place of all other titles, 'Brother.'" In March 1712, when Swift was lodging in Suffolk-street, the house of one of these *brothers*, that of Sir William Wyndham in the Haymarket, was burnt to the ground. His wife, the Duke of Somerset's daughter, escaped barefooted; two female servants were killed on the spot by jumping out of the windows; and the loss of the house, and all destroyed in it, was not less to his *brother* Wyndham than ten or twelve thousand pounds. During this terrible accident the kind-hearted, friendly *brother* Swift, after having learnt (as he tells us) where the fire was,

(1) Letter, January 14. 1711. beginning, "Mr. Harley "desired me to dine with him to-day."

quietly turned himself to sleep again, although the noise and confusion in the neighbourhood was such as to have awakened his servant, and the people of the house where he lodged. But what could be expected from a man, who from his earliest youth had betrayed, in all the social relations of life, a character of irreclaimable, selfish pride and hard-heartedness; who seems to have mistaken a tyrannical for an independent spirit, and insolence of manner for dignity of mind; who, while invariably pursuing a system of self-interest and self-indulgence with respect to others, captiously resents the slightest mark of neglect to himself. However we may allow the straitened circumstances of his infancy and early education to have soured his humour, and distempered his first views of human life, his residence with Sir William Temple, which, with some short interruptions, lasted for nearly eleven years, ought essentially to have improved his character and manners, as well as his abilities. But his proud, unsubmitting, selfish spirit seems never to have forgiven the noviciate of the acquaintance. The polished manners and ripened judgment of Sir William Temple were at first shocked by the unaccommodating and assuming pretensions of a young man, who could not yet have proved his title to any such indulgence.

On further acquaintance, he appears to have done ample justice to his merits, and during the latter years of their association he certainly procured for Swift advantages which he could hardly otherwise have obtained, and which, gifted as he was by nature, were perhaps of all others the greatest which, at his time of life, he could have received; yet still dissatisfied with Sir William's endeavours to serve him while he lived, and disappointed in his pecuniary expectations at his death, Swift seems to have retained a rancorous hatred to all his family, which breaks out whenever the name of Lady Gifford (Sir William's sister) is mentioned in his correspondence. With this Lady Gifford lived the mother of Stella, the widow of a merchant in London, and her two daughters; for such was their father, as we are assured by the last and best of Swift's biographers: she was in a situation which seems to have been something between that of a friend and a humble companion. To one of her daughters, Swift, while yet an inmate in Sir William Temple's family, became attached; and no other objection could probably have ever been made to their union, had he proposed it, but the young man not yet possessing the means of subsistence. When, at the age of thirty-three, he was established in Ireland as vicar of Laracor,

he seduced this daughter, not eighteen years old, away from her mother and sister, and the honourable protection under which they lived, to follow him to Ireland. She was accompanied by a person of the name of Dingley, several years older than herself, and though a distant relation of the Temple family, in the same sort of subordinate situation. This *seduction*, for the word must surely be applied to the heart and affections, as well as to the person, could only have been effected, and could only have been consented to by the mother, under an express understanding with Swift, as well as a perfect confidence in his honour, that a marriage was to take place as soon as his circumstances admitted of it. Stella was this deceived, unhappy woman, who seems in every respect, both of mind, character, and person, to have deserved a better fate. She was retained till her death in Ireland by the fallacious hope of every day becoming the wife of him, who, although fifteen years older than herself, had possessed himself of her earliest affections: indeed, had his conduct estranged them, the unprotected situation, and the equivocal light in which that situation must necessarily have been viewed in Ireland, made her entirely dependent on his will. In one instance she appears to have been desirous, even at the expence of her feel-

ings, to have emancipated herself from a thraldom, which, whatever blandishments vanity might have thrown around it, must have been repugnant to any noble mind. A very respectable clergyman of the name of Tisdale wished to marry her, and, with a confidence which he basely betrayed, made Swift his mediator with Stella. No sooner did her cold-hearted tyrant find she was about to recover her liberty, than he overwhelmed his rival with every kind of ridicule, and found means, under a specious show of disinterestedness, so to calumniate him to the mind of Stella, that she felt herself obliged to give up, or had not the resolution to prosecute this only means of independence. She had already remained nine years in Ireland, subject to the arbitrary will of the most arbitrary of characters, without either the public respect, or the internal sense of duty, which as his wife might have soothed such a situation. Every expectation disappointed, and every feeling ungratified, except her vanity, if complimentary verses, and childish expressions of an affection failing in all its real dictates, could gratify it, Swift, after having repeatedly left his victim in Ireland, whilst he sought his own personal advancement and interests in London, was sent thither (as is known) in the year 1710, deputed

by the clergy of Ireland to obtain from Queen Anne's government the remission of certain duties and rights on them. Here a new scene opened to his ambition, and his talents were called forth in the manner of all others in which they were the most available, as a party writer to a new administration. During this absence, prolonged to three years, he continued to write constantly and uninterruptedly to Stella; and we see in the course of this very curious journal how rapidly he advances in his high opinion of himself, and his contempt and hatred for the rest of mankind. It must have been a considerable relief to him, to pour into a partial and patient ear every feeling of his selfish, haughty mind. The poor deceived Stella meanwhile was by this detailed and regular correspondence confirmed in the hope that his successes and fame in England were advancing their union, wherever his lot might afterwards be cast. The encouragement of this self-deception was doubly necessary on his part, as, during the first year of his establishment in London, he became the intimate of a family, where he soon gave Stella a rival in wretchedness, if not in his affections. Let it be here remarked, to the honour of the female sex, that great talents have almost always been irresistible, in securing the attachment of

women. With Swift they were certainly unaccompanied by any personal graces or softness of manner. He was coarse and abusive to all women who did not particularly please him, or on whom his interest did not particularly depend. We must suppose that to those he wished to please, the charm consisted in the belief that he excepted them from the odium he cast on the rest of their sex; while, in fact, submission to all his petty pretensions, and some lucky conciliation of his inordinate and vulgar pride, seem to have been the chief passes to his favour.

Miss Vanhomrigh, unfortunately known to the world by the name of Vanessa, was both in a station of life and of a personal character very different from that of Stella. Her father, originally a merchant at Amsterdam, had been employed in the commissariat of the troops of King William in Ireland. Two daughters by the death of their brothers inherited his fortune, and lived with their widowed mother in London, when Swift came there in 1710. Vanessa could not then have been twenty, for in August 1711 he mentions her being come of age, and intending to go to Ireland to look after the property her father had left there. To this young person Swift appeared in the zenith of his glory; his works, and his wit, the dread of one party,

the support of the other, and the admired of all; himself treating with affected contempt what the rest of the world envied, and with calculated rudeness the advances of those whom the rest of the world sought: no wonder that his society and his attentions made a strong impression on a young and ardent mind, possessed of a great desire of knowledge, already more accomplished than was common to her age, and with much aptitude for improvement. Of this impression, Swift, at the ripened age of forty-two, must have been early aware; and whatever may have been the supposed insuperable objections to his union with Stella, his encouraging the feelings, and giving way to his own selfish indulgence and flattered vanity in his intercourse with Vanessa, is equally unjustifiable to her, to Stella, and, above all (as his editors would give us to understand), to himself. These editors, we must be allowed to observe, have all treated his character, as to the circumstances of his private life, with a degree of partiality which reminds us of the fable of the lion, described in a picture as subdued in single combat by a man. Had the lions been painters, says the fable, the story would have been differently represented: perhaps, in the present case, and for the same reason, misrepresentation may be suspected in

the author of these pages. The correspondence which has luckily been retrieved with Vanessa will, it is believed, bear out all, and more than all that has been said of *his* cruelty and *her* innocence. But whatever impression may be left of the general character and conduct of Swift in his private life, let at least the weaker sex remember, and rest satisfied, that the great object of his wishes and ambition — a settlement in England, and an English bishopric — were defeated not by the Tale of the Tub (1), or any other vagrant effusions of his wit, but by the weak arm of a woman — by that sex to whom retributive justice owed and committed his punishment.

With the Duchess of Somerset he had no ac-

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(1) "The project for the advancement of religion, published in 1709, made a deep and powerful sensation on all those who considered national prosperity as connected with national morals. It may, in some respects, be considered as a sequel of the humorous argument against abolishing Christianity, &c. It was very favourably received by the public, and appears to have been laid before the Queen by the Archbishop of York (Sharpe), the very prelate who had denounced to her private ear the *supposed* author of the Tale of a Tub." — SCOTT's *Life of Swift*, vol. i. p. 105. So that we see it was not this archbishop, of whom Swift always speaks with the virulence of an irreconcilable enemy, nor the Queen's opinion previous to his attack on the Duchess of Somerset, which were the real obstructions to his preferment in England.

quaintance; he knew her only by dreading her influence with the Queen against the measures of the Tory ministry at the opening of parliament in 1711. Her he attacked in a manner which no party feelings could justify, and hardly Christian charity forgive. By the extraordinary circumstances in which this great heiress had been placed in early youth, when she could scarcely be said to have a choice, and still less a will of her own, she was twice married, and twice a widow, before she was fifteen years old. Of the poisoning her first husband Lord Ogle, and of the assassination of her second, Mr. Thynne, Swift in no measured terms accuses her of being an accomplice. (1) There are few persons, it is believed, but will allow, that such an accusation, brought forward at such a moment in the form of political verses, by a most popular political writer, and likely to be in the hands of all the world, was a very sufficient cause for the indignant feelings of the person so vilely traduced; that the author of such a scandal, having convicted himself of the unchristian charges of "envy, spite, malice, and all uncharitableness," justified the Duchess of Somerset in powerfully

(1) See Windsor's Prophecy, vol. x. p.379. Swift's Works, Scott's edition.

exerting that influence over the Queen which her traducer so much dreaded; it rendered abortive all attempts of the ministry, to whom he had thus prostituted his talents, to effect his establishment in England.

In Ireland, the farther prosecution of the punishment due to him from the female sex condemned him to survive, while yet in the vigour of life, both the victims of his cold-hearted selfishness. It is evident that had his ambitious views succeeded, poor Stella would never have been his wife. Whether he would have submitted to remove by marriage the slur which his contemptible vanity induced him to cast on the reputation of Vanessa, must remain in the same uncertainty which involves his inexplicable and unprincipled cruelty in not avowing his tardy union with the dying Stella.

More than enough has perhaps been said on this subject, after the just and admirable view of which the public are already in possession of Swift's conduct, both in a political and social light, in the Edinburgh Review of the last edition of his works. The author of that Review, with the energy inspired by sound principles both of political and moral feeling, has completely stripped "the gilding off a knave;" a gilding which nothing but the popular nature of

his works, and the moment of political agitation in which they appeared, could have preserved so long; and the impartial judgment of posterity will confirm the critic's assertion, "That, whatever merits Swift might have as a writer, he "was despicable as a politician, and hateful as a "man."(1)

Of the charm of Addison's society even Swift himself bears record. (2) But the extreme delicacy of Addison's taste, and his want of promptitude of decision, even in the choice of words, must have been an impediment to the excellence of his general conversation, as it was to his talents in public business.

It sometimes happens, that writers the most distinguished by the liveliness and brilliancy of their pen, have by no means supported the same character in their social intercourse. But Congreve, we know, was not less superior in his own colloquial powers than in those he bestowed on the characters of his inimitable comedies. The good company in which he lived, and his own good taste, purified his conversation from that

(1) Edinburgh Review, No. LIII. p. 44.

(2) "Mr. Addison's election has passed easy and undis-"puted, and I believe if he had a mind to be chosen king, "he would hardly be refused."— *Journal to Stella*, Oct. 10. 1710.

profligacy and coarseness of expression which still remained the received language of the stage. That the admirable wit and profound knowledge of human character which dictated his comedies should have been expressed in this language, is the more to be regretted as it degrades the tone of his satire, and is apparent to those incapable of comprehending either the wit of his allusions or the philosophy of his wit.

The dramatic works of Steele, his private letters, and the Tatlers, leave a very agreeable impression of the character of their author. Unfortunately, in the conduct of his own affairs he seems to have been both unwise and unlucky. By his own careless extravagance, and his wife's over-attention on the subject of money, he appears to have been always leading a life of shifts and expedients, which, however they may favour literary exertions, are very incompatible with social enjoyment.

Prior's admirable verses betray sometimes a coarseness of thought, and sometimes of expression, which, without any reproach to his genius, must be attributed to the first impressions of early youth; to the company he must inevitably have kept, before his talents had raised him from a situation to which he so soon proved himself superior. When placed by his abilities in the

society of princes and ministers, his tastes and his affections remained nearer the level of his former fortunes. The secretary to the pompous embassy of Bentinck (1), the minister at Versailles negotiating the peace of Utrecht, was still the faithful admirer of the butcher's wife in Middle-row, whom he propitiated in verses, of which the coarsest parts were probably above the level of her taste.

Gay seems to have been the beloved child of the knot of superior spirits with whom he lived. Their character never appears in a more amiable light than in their feelings for Gay; in the anxiety they showed to further his interests,

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(1) The embassy of the Earl of Portland to France, in 1698, cost 80,000*l*. He was accompanied by six young lords and three gentlemen, besides Prior as secretary to the embassy. His public entry into Paris, on the 27th February, was more magnificent than any thing that had been seen since the Duke of Buckingham in Charles the First's time. He was attended by a gentleman of the horse, twelve pages, fifty-six footmen, twelve led horses, four coaches with eight horses, and two chariots with six. He received every sort of respect and attention from Louis the Fourteenth, and returned loaded with presents; but it was remarked, that no embassy had been more honoured or less successful in its objects, as it neither obtained the removal of King James from the neighbourhood of Paris, nor any mitigation of the persecutions of the Protestants. — See HARRIS's *History of King William*, p. 463.

and the manner in which they praised, criticised, and rejoiced in the success of his works.

It has been remarked with great truth, by a late distinguished writer on the principles of taste, "That corruption in the fine arts and extravagancies in dress have generally accompanied each other; but that literature never manifested any symptoms of sympathy with either. From the middle of the seventeenth to the middle of the eighteenth century the fashions in dress were carried to the utmost extreme of deformity; and imitative art sunk to its lowest state of degradation, at the same time that taste in literary composition, both in England and France, attained a degree of purity and perfection only surpassed by that of the finest ages of Greece or Rome." (1) The age of Queen Anne would seem to justify this remark; for at no other time was painting, sculpture, and architecture at a lower ebb. It was not as in the days of Leo, that

"A Raphael painted, and a Vida sung:"

although Pope, it must be confessed, was as superior to Vida as Raphael was to Sir Godfrey Kneller. In female dress, in furniture, in every

(1) Knight on Taste, p. 431.

species of ornament, amenable to the laws of taste, nothing could be further removed from those forms which we have since found we can neither rival nor improve. The enormous wigs of the men, their stiffened coats, long waistcoats, short breeches, and rolled stockings, were infinitely less consonant with grace, and deformed the human figure much more than the cloak, ruff, close doublet, and trunk hose of the preceding age. The long stays, small hoops, stiff silk gowns, and boot sleeves of the women were so ungraceful, that their painters, Jervis and Kneller, changed them entirely into that indescribable robe in which they are in all their portraits more or less enveloped, and which nothing but the art of their brush could suspend for a moment on any human body.

Sculpture produced only those heavy-headed cherubim, cumbrous angels, and periwig-pated portraits, which loaded the walls of Westminster Abbey, and in our provincial cathedrals and parish churches ill contrasted with the altar-tombs of a former age, on which repose the knight and his lady side by side, in the dress, and with the features they wore in life — a Vandyke portrait admirably executed in marble.

Architecture assumed a strange, anomalous style, unknown to any age or nation where a

high state of cultivation had produced ornament in building. The huge masses of stone or brick raised at this period, and during the reigns of the two first Georges, are for the most part without any attempt at ornament, except some uncouth, non-descript flourishes over the door and middle window of the edifice. The only prevalent idea of the builders seems to have been a number of windows, small in their proportions, and multiplied when an effect of grandeur was intended to be produced; an absence of all projections and salient angles, that could effect any charm from light and shadow, or any comfort from a wide overhanging roof, or the shelter of a porched door. The genius of Vanburgh soared above his age; the proportions of Grecian architecture were not then familiar to artists; he swerved from all Roman models, and formed to himself a style, which, when examined by the rules of his art, transgresses them all; but when viewed as a whole in the great buildings he erected, produces an effect which could only have been calculated by a superior and original genius. Sir Joshua Reynolds, with the eye of a painter, sagaciously observes, that Vanburgh was particularly careful to make such accompaniments and back-grounds to his buildings, as gave them effect, and avoided

their rising crudely out of the ground, like many of our admired country seats, from a bald, smooth-shaven lawn. Hence his great substructures, flights of steps, and balustrades, and, below them, terraces ornamented with architectural sculpture, vases, pedestals, and the like. The eye thus became familiar with ornament before it met all that he lavished on the edifice whose character was intended to be magnificence. Blenheim and Castle Howard prove how well their architect succeeded in that intention.

CHAPTER VII.

IGNORANCE OF THE GOVERNMENT OF LOUIS THE FOURTEENTH. — THEOLOGICAL DISPUTES. — SUSPICIONS OF POISON. — MADAME DE BRINVILLIERS. — JESUITS AND JANSENISTS. — VOLTAIRE. — REGENT'S GOVERNMENT HURRIED ON THE REVOLUTION. — CONDUCT OF THE FRENCH NOBILITY AND OF THE POPULAR PARTY AT THE BEGINNING OF THE REVOLUTION. — STATE OF THE PUBLIC MIND IN EUROPE. — ROUSSEAU, EFFECTS PRODUCED BY HIS WRITINGS IN FRANCE. — ABSENCE OF ALL REGARD TO MORAL TRUTH. — MADAME DU CHATELET. — ST. LAMBERT. — MADAME DE GRAFIGNY. — MADAME D'EPINAY, HER SOCIETY, ROUSSEAU'S CONDUCT IN IT. — MADAME D'HOUDETOT.

THE government of Louis the Fourteenth, and of his immediate successor, seems to have been quite insensible to the progress made by the human mind during his reign, and to the natural tendency of all the enterprise and activity excited by it. They seem to have thought they could arrest both at pleasure, and while in fact a flood of light was pouring in from every point of the intellectual compass, they endeavoured to prevent any portion of its rays from falling on the

subjects most seriously interesting to the civil existence of man.

All the quickness, industry, and enthusiasm which we have since seen produce such astonishing effects when employed on subjects worthy of them, were then alike shut out from the discussion of politics, of government, of every useful speculation in the philosophy of human life. The active, when not engaged in war, were condemned to a dangerous idleness. The studious were too often obliged to waste their talents in a futile literature, in disputes on the merits of a sonnet, or the legitimacy of a verse, or to bewilder themselves in controversial learning on abstract points of faith, incomprehensible differences in the creeds and precepts of the church, or of forms and etiquettes in her ceremonials. Hence an Andilly (1), whose great talents and prolonged life might have enlightened his contemporaries in grammar and logic, left behind him 104 volumes, not one of which has added a line to the stock books of European literature. Hence the keen powers of reasoning and admirable humour of a Pascal were wasted on a subject long since condemned to oblivion; and (having been exerted for party, and not for general interests) have lost

(1) Antoine d'Andilly.

much with posterity. Hence the elegant mind and varied powers of a Fenelon are scarcely known, but by a romance, in the composition of which his intellect sought repose from subjects less naturally interesting to him, but to which his profession, and the age in which he lived, condemned him to confine his studies.

It would be difficult to imagine how inane disputes, worthy of the darkness of the middle ages, could yet occupy any part of the talents of a nation already distinguished by its learning and literature. But we invariably observe that where the existence of public spirit is repressed by the institutions of the country, or by the rights of its inhabitants being ill defined, *l'esprit de corps* reigns with uncontrolled intensity, in defiance both of reason and of truth. "La "communauté d'intérêts donne de la valeur à "des passions qui seroient nulles dans leur "isolement; et le gouvernement s'étonne d'une "résistance qu'il a crée lui-même." (1) Hence the eternal quarrels of the clergy and parliaments of France during the latter part of the reign of Louis the Fourteenth and the regency, through a long succession of nonsensical disputes on

(1) Le Montey, p. 404.

Jansenism, Molinism, Quietism, on the Bull Unigenitus, the constitution, and the *billets de confession.*

The lamentable ignorance of the King, and his consequent want of all enlargement of mind, subjected him to the prejudices of the times as entirely as would have been the case with a more ordinary understanding and character. His want of all information on religious subjects, which even Madame de Maintenon avows and laments, made him a dupe to the insinuations of the priests about him. The Jesuit le Tellier persuaded him that the doctrines of Jansenism were unfriendly to his absolute authority. Instead of crushing the disputes between the Jesuits and Jansenists by the arm of power, as he had in his earlier years the pretensions of the noblesse against his authority; his scruples encouraged their virulence, and allowed them to fill the prisons with persons accused of Jansenism. Even Bossuet, the great Bossuet, condescended to make use of the same means to frighten the King, representing the mystical nonsense of the enthusiast Madame Guyon (1)

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(1) Madame Guyon, the head of the sect of Quietists, was of Montargis, left young the widow of Guyon, the person who had undertaken the construction of an inland navi-

as dangerous to the state, and a pious work of the elegant and accomplished Fenelon as so heretical, that the poor deceived King wrote himself to Pope Innocent the Eleventh, to press his decision on a book (1) which is only known to posterity by the circumstance of a papal censure having fallen on any writing of its pure and pious author.

An ignorance of the true principles of that Christian faith which they all professed, and all disgraced, had led to these endless disputes of the clergy. A still greater ignorance on all subjects of natural philosophy, and of experimental chemistry, and medicine connected with it, produced a strange and remarkable anomaly in the man-

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gation at Briaire. She was good-looking, and had some fortune. Her confessor, a Barnabite monk from Anneci, near Geneva, encouraged her romantic disposition to mysticity, and she aimed at being a second St. Thérèse. Her name and adventures would probably have been soon forgotten in France had she not been the means of creating dissension between Bossuet and Fenelon.

(1) *Les Maximes des Saints.* In thirty-seven conferences at Rome, thirty-seven propositions extracted from this work were judged erroneous by a majority of voices, and a brief from the Pope, declaring this sentence, published in Rome March, 1699. Fenelon, instead of defending himself, and making to himself a great party by his persecution, submitted to the sentence, and publicly, in his pulpit, agreed in the condemnation of his book.

ners of a court which boasted of an amenity and refinement unknown to other nations. In the midst of this court, whose occupation was pleasure, in the most brilliant period of the reign of Louis the Fourteenth, and among the persons forming his immediate society, suspicions of poison, the basest of crimes, became familiar, and accusations of attempting it frequent.

This can only be accounted for by the universal ignorance which invited fools to seek, knaves to administer, and the government to punish with disgraceful éclat, preparations, potions, and secrets to create love, to avoid old age, to cure irremediable ills, to restore faded charms, renew exhausted strength, and arrest passing enjoyments. During the turbulence and crimes of the sixteenth century, poison had doubtless been often employed to remove importunate claimants to rich successions, or to gratify private vengeance. The supposed security of the murderer, and the insufficiency of strength or courage against such an enemy, had recommended it to the weak in that age of violence, and the *fashion* of the crime (if the expression be allowable) might not be quite passed away in the times of which we are speaking. Madame de Brinvilliers, at the instigation and with the assistance of her Italian lover, was doubtless guilty of many of the

murders laid to her charge. But many of the persons who were accused of consulting her were probably guilty of nothing but the enormous folly of believing that an ignorant and profligate woman possessed powers which no science could procure, and no mortal delegate.

The different character assumed in different ages by the professors in supernatural cures, and in secrets unknown to the scrutinising eye of experimental philosophy, is worthy of remark.

In the age of Madame de Brinvilliers, pretenders to occult sciences courted the supposition of their dealings with the devil, and allowed it to be understood that their purchase of supernatural powers at the expence of their own souls in the next world, should enhance the price of their services to their friends in this.

But the empirics of the next age, so far from dealing in poisons and receiving their commissions from the devil, had nothing but piety and purity in their mouths. With no less boldness than their predecessors, they asserted that all their powers were derived from superior virtues, from intensity of meditation, and from universal benevolence. The Grahams, the Mesmers, the Cagliostros of the last fifty years, took a directly contrary way to arrive at the same point of imposition on the credulous.

At the time that the courts of Rome and France were still bewildering themselves in endless disputes and interminable negotiations on unintelligible subjects, arose the financial system of Law, which at once calmed all differences by turning the morbid activity which chiefly occasioned them to speculations of gain; and the system of Law at once did more than bishops, cardinals, the Pope, and Louis the Fourteenth, had been able to effect, by uniting Jesuits and Jansenists in one common pursuit.

The Regent's government had hurried on the fate of France beyond the natural and inevitable progression of circumstances. His unbridled profligacy had loosened every moral restraint, and his weak belief that there was a *royal way* to national wealth, a short cut which left both industry and economy far behind, not only precipitated the ruin and confiscation of the national resources, but completed that of the honour and moral character of the people. The natural riches and the natural cleverness and activity of that people soon succeeded in restoring the country to its natural and unalienable wealth; but from their moral degradation the upper orders never recovered. When the bubble of imaginary riches burst, the warfare of fanaticism was recommenced with new virulence and with new

follies; and that both parties might be equally blameable, both Jansenists and Jesuits began to work miracles in the cure of diseases.

The power of the Jesuits, however, declined with that of le Tellier at the death of Louis the Fourteenth. And the *Convulsionaires* at the tomb of a priest in the church-yard of St. Medard were the last efforts of the spirit of Jansenism among the people. (1) The almost worn-out and threadbare fanaticism of polemical divinity, which had been the subject of some of the most disgraceful pages in the history of man, had served at the same time to awaken the intellects of an ignorant world, and to sharpen the wits of those whose swords were not employed in cutting the throats of each other for private interests or individual vengeance. This fanaticism, which, during a great part of the reign of Louis the Fifteenth, had

(1) Towards the end of Queen Anne's reign, there appeared in England a number of fanatics who pretended to (and probably thought they possessed) the gift of prophecy. They used to assemble in Moorfields and exercise this gift, surrounded by crowds of idle and curious people. They were suppressed by the wise conduct of the government towards them. Instead of dispersing them by force, or taking them up, Powel, the master of a celebrated puppet-show, was desired to make Punch turn prophet, which he did with such success as soon to silence his competitors.

begun to assume a political character, and to designate parties in the state almost as much as sects in the church; this fanaticism, within seventy years afterwards, gave way at once to the fanaticism of liberty, which, like all errors founded on true principles, went much further astray than the one it supplanted. The first had been long estranged from all the pure and incontrovertible truths of Christianity, and retained no hold but on the weakness and vindictiveness of man; while the second originated in all that ennobles and elevates his character.

At the moment when the human mind in France was undergoing this essential change in its principle of action; when recovered from its blind adoration of the despotism of Louis the Fourteenth by the mortifications and by the misgovernment of his latter years; when, loosened from its former prejudices, it began to regard the past with contempt, and the future with confidence, a genius started forward, singularly fitted to lead the way, and to advance his followers in the vast career of mind and intellect which his writings opened to them.

The talents of Voltaire were as peculiarly favoured by the age and circumstances in which he appeared as those of Louis the Fourteenth had been half a century before. The difference

in the manners of the nation, and in the fashions and the splendour of the court, was not greater at the commencement of his reign and at his death than was the difference of the national mind and ways of thinking, as Voltaire found and as he left them. Both the monarch and the author reigned absolutely over the opinions and character of the people and of the period to which they belonged. Both injured themselves by an attempt at universal sway. To both a long age of glory was allowed, which both sullied in their latter years: the one by listening to the dictates of a narrow-minded bigotry, which led him to measures of individual persecution and national calamity; the other, by his insatiate thirst for praise betraying him into unworthy and dishonest means of acquiring that which he already possessed in an unexampled degree. "L'amour de la gloire ne l'affranchissoit d'aucune inquiétude de la vanité (1);" and this vanity gave him an excessive and ever increasing irritability against literary adversaries, whose insignificance was only brought into observation by his notice.

The combat between the institutions and the opinions of France, which may be said to have

(1) Histoire du Dixhuitième Siècle, tom. iii. p. 68.

begun with Voltaire, were brought to an issue by his genius. Had that genius been of a less general and less popular nature, and had his moral principles been of a severer cast, exile, persecution, and punishment would have immediately followed the first enunciation of his political and religious opinions.

But while he showed himself so superior, so brilliant, and often so just in his views of the great subjects most interesting to humanity, his dramas charmed and enlightened those yet incapable of more serious instruction. The laxity of many of his lighter works, and the often, profligate displays of his wit, assimilated him to the frivolous world over which his astonishing genius soared, although unable ever entirely to purify itself from the stains of the age to which it belonged. Thus, in recording Cardinal Alberoni's plans, and the Duchesse de Maine's contemporary plot during the Regency, Voltaire evidently writes to produce effect. He could neither believe in the magnitude of those plans, nor in the probability of their success. In the history of any other country, or any other period, instead of talking seriously of the Duchesse de Maine's conspiracy, he would have laughed at the idea of *carrying off* a first prince of the blood, the regent of the kingdom; and

would have asked, what they were to do with him — what they were to do with themselves, if they had succeeded? But Voltaire had been brought up in the midst of these ridiculous intrigues, had been long admired at the court of Sceaux, and felt that partiality for the follies of his contemporaries which the remembrances of early youth commonly produce. Of the whole of the Regent's reign he speaks in the same tone, with the same feelings of tenderness towards the depravity in which he had himself participated; calls the elevation of the infamous and ignorant Dubois merely *ridiculous;* says on his death, "Nous rimes de sa mort, comme de son élévation;" speaks of the excesses of the Regent and of his court as mere gaiety and mirth; and finishes by comparing him to Henry the Fourth! The writer, who has so often lamented the manner in which history is falsified, should have avoided a falsification, at once more pernicious to the interests of morality, and more discreditable to its author, than any of those of which he complains.

In the accounts which are handed down to us, on very unimpeachable authority, of the abandoned conduct and disgraceful compliances of women of the highest rank to the adventurer Law, when the stream of Pactolus was

supposed to flow through his hands, we recognize the ancestors of those who, at the beginning of the Revolution in 1789, profited by the first moment of public disorder to throw off every restraint, and, under weak and selfish pretences of personal suffering, to elope from their families in danger, and their country in confusion: while the men, bearing some of the most illustrious names of France, whose progenitors in the year 1717 had crowded the Rue Quincampoix (1), in the year 1789, having, by their obstinacy and cupidity, hurried their innocent and well-intentioned monarch into the difficulties which their own ignorance prevented their seeing, left him to encounter that popular fury which *their* conduct had chiefly excited; and left their injured and enraged country to inflict on itself that dreadful punishment, which, in fact, its aristocracy only deserved. (2)

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(1) The Rue Quincampoix is a narrow street in the quartier de St. Denis, where the transactions of the bank were first carried on; but the crowds became so excessive, and so choked up the street and all its environs, that many serious accidents occurred in the press before the books and the transfers of stock were removed, first, to the Hôtel de Nevers (now the King's library), then, as a still larger space, to the Place de Vendôme, and afterwards to the garden of the Hôtel de Soissons.

(2) "La régénération nationale de 1789 offroit à la no-

How can all the illustrious names, boasting of twelve centuries of uncontaminated blood and of distinguished actions, how can they excuse their dispersion at the beginning of the Revolution? What future ages must pass away, what brilliant achievements be recorded, before this disgraceful blot can be erased from their escutcheons! In vain will they urge, that they left their King, at his own request, only to return with the means of defending him; for to own having abandoned him to save themselves will hardly be brought forward by the nation who boasted preferring

" Chimène à la vie, et l'honneur à Chimène."

" blesse Françoise un moyen d'expier les tort de ses an-
" cêtres, et de substituer à une existence privilégiée, qui
" touchoit à son terme, une existence citoyenne, où elle eut
" trouvé d'amples dédommagemens. Sauf des exceptions,
" que je voudrois croire nombreuses, et auxquelles je
" me plais à rendre hommage, elle refusa cet honorable
" traité. Sourde aux avertissemens d'une necessité, que
" l'aveuglement le plus complet pouvoit seul méconnoître,
" irritée des conseils de ses membres les plus éclairés, elle
" se plaça en dehors d'une nation, disposée à considérer
" comme hostile, tout ce qui mettoit son orgueil à lui rester
" étranger, et par ses protestations inconsiderées, par ses
" menaces, qui n'avoient de danger que pour elle-même, elle
" donna plus de consistence et d'amertume à des souvenirs
" facheux, et plus de vraisemblance aux soupçons que ces
" souvenirs autorisoit." — B. CONSTANT, *Lettres sur les Cent Jours*, partie ii. p. 110.

But they fled, leaving their King in the midst of an enraged capital and a discontented country: they fled to strangers for that assistance which they felt they could not hope for from their own dependents. Had not the great territorial proprietors known that many of them were as obnoxious (and much more justly so) to their own vassals than their poor deserted King was to the populace of Paris, they would have gone down to their estates, and spread themselves over the provinces. Even to the most ignorant it was apparent, that factious and mischievous spirits were endeavouring to corrupt their inhabitants; although few calculated how rapidly the imperious progression of circumstances was advancing this corruption. Instead of abandoning at such a moment their irritated and misguided country, had they possessed either energy or conduct, they would have reclaimed or perished with her.

The excellent account given by Las Casas, in his *Mémorial de St. Hélène*, of the beginning, the progress, and the effects of emigration, confirms all that is here said. He treats of it with a truth, and places it in a light, which, as he had himself participated in the folly and madness of the measure, could only have been drawn from him by the powerful influence of the person

who bade him speak. (1) We see that even at first, when emigration was considered as something heroic and chevalresque in the young, such was the excessive ignorance and infatuation of the older heads guilty of the same misconduct as to the real sentiments and situation of their country, that, if they repressed rather than encouraged the measure, it was only from a fear that the supposed advantages attached to it would be shared by too many competitors, on the triumphant return which they all anticipated into France.

In the mean time, the coteries of the princes, and those of the first society in Paris, disarranged by the bustle, and frightened by the disorder of the times, dispersed and re-united themselves at Coblentz. Many of the secret ties connecting these coteries, which propriety and a regard to appearances (the only moral feeling remaining) had concealed or left doubtful at Paris, were at once discovered and brought to light by frequent journeys to the frontiers; by violent declarations of political principles in persons hardly suspected of having any; by supposed duties never heard of before, to those they followed, or

(1) Buonaparte. See Las Casas, *Mémorial de St. Hélène*, tom. iii. p. 85.

to those they left behind; by sacrifices of fortune, of fame, and of country, made with magnanimous carelessness to please the mistress or follow the fashion of the moment.

Nothing can place in a stronger light the severe discipline required by the upper orders of society in France at this period, to restore them to a sense of their real situation and duties, than the account given in the work to which we have already alluded of the conduct and manners of these mistaken people, under circumstances which raised them in no eyes but their own. Their insolent manners and absurd pretensions in the countries which had afforded them refuge (1); their intolerant etiquettes, ridiculous out of the walls of their own palaces; their jealousy of each other, their animosity against any one who had hesitated longer than themselves at abandoning their country, their presuming insolence on what they conceived their own superior conduct, was as remarkable and as little to the credit either of their character or understanding as was afterwards honourable

(1) At the table of the Elector of Treves, in the year 1791, a French emigré (whose name is well forgotten) said aloud to one of his countrymen seated by the Elector, " Ami, crois-tu que c'est mieux de mourir de faim, ou " d'avoir mangé d'un ragoût Allemand ? "

to both the manner in which many of them supported the dreadful adversity which quickly followed their infatuation.

Las Casas must be pardoned for endeavouring to give the best colour he can to the motives which first led them astray. He boasts the generosity of their sentiments, the purity of their intentions, and the heroic devotion of the "*gentilhommes de province.*" But the unadorned truth is, that to this last order of persons, and to such of the noblesse not habitually living at Paris, or living at Paris unattached to the court, the great incentive to emigration was the opportunity it gave of approaching the persons and attracting the notice of their princes, and associating themselves to the higher nobility, into whose society they never could have forced themselves at court, or at Paris, where their pretensions would only have exposed them to the merciless wounds of ridicule. It was such wounds already festering in the breasts of many, that urged them to adopt with acrimony the popular cause, and to be foremost in the ranks of reform. Meanwhile, the wiser democratical leaders, aware of the consequences of emigration, secretly encouraged it, and whilst they declaimed from the tribune of the National Assembly against evaders, took care to leave all

doors open to facilitate escape. If the disposition towards emigration seemed to relax, their harangues against it became more violent, and their orders more severe. This was sure to create a new impulse to fly, and care was taken that what appeared a mere accidental negligence at the barriers, allowed those who fled all the liberty they wished. Regiments were encouraged to revolt, that their commanding officers might fancy it necessary to leave them. By this means the ruling party got rid of persons ill disposed towards them, and found in the subalterns and non-commissioned officers zealous friends to the new arrangements, among whom arose most of those great leaders who so long defeated the efforts of all the regularly-trained troops of Europe.

While the King was thus abandoned, the country was left to be torn in pieces during ten years by the most bloody and despicable demagogues that were ever let loose on a people, deprived of all their natural counsellors and defenders, and forced to struggle out of anarchy through all the horrors of popular convulsions. The inevitable consequences, the natural death entailed by such convulsions, was the military despotism which so long extended its iron arm over that rich and highly-favoured country,

which her nobles deserted, instead of defending, and irritated instead of guiding.

However such conduct may have been glossed over by the panic of the moment, from the impartial pen of history those guilty of it cannot hope to escape. In the future records of France, the violence, the barbarity, the atrocities of an ignorant and incensed populace, powerfully excited, will be noticed with compassion; while the dereliction of her most illustrious nobles, her captains, and her statesmen, will be consigned to the judgment it merits.

Let not the author be here misunderstood: that author knows and reverences the individual talents and virtues of the French nation; honours innumerable instances of devoted attachment to their country, and of enlightened love of their monarch and his race; respects the conduct of thousands involved from inevitable circumstances in their disastrous emigration, and remembers with respect and admiration their conduct under all the privations, sufferings, and mortifications to which it subjected them: — but the author is here speaking of emigration as a political measure of the day, and ventures to attribute it to what it is believed all thinking minds will allow to have been at once its cause

and its excuse — to the general degraded state of moral feeling under institutions which the natural quickness of the nation had long outrun. To which must be added the administration of a series of weak ministers, acting under, or rather *for*, the two dissipated and profligate princes (the Regent and Louis the Fifteenth), who, in succeeding to Louis the Fourteenth, succeeded to all the unpopularity which the disorder of the finances entailed by the passing glory of his reign necessarily devolved on his successors.

The spectacle of a great nation shaking off chains it had so long worn, and reclaiming rights of which it had been so long deprived, soon attracted the eyes and interested the feelings of all Europe in its success: — that success it was itself entirely unprepared either to bear or to profit by. Its wits and its philosophers had undermined every prop, both of its throne and of its altars, without having condescended to form any plan for a new construction, or even to have any foresight of what was likely to arise from the ruins they had made. Few of their number had had opportunities of occupying themselves in any practical details of reform; and the whole bulk of the nation, educated for centuries in the habits of despotism, had no standard to recur to

by which to measure either their rights, their expectations, or their demands. (1)

In our great dispute with our monarch, a century before, we reclaimed rights acknowledged by repeated charters, confirmed by successive sovereigns, never infringed without remonstrance, and seldom without a further security for their future observance. But the intoxication of France, on her first successes, in a cause so new, was immediately followed by a general fever of mind, a mental epidemy, accompanied by symptoms of delirium at once horrible and ridiculous. From a centre of infection so potent, the disease soon spread itself nationally and individually over the greater part of Europe, marking its progress by schemes of impossible reform, complaints of irremediable evils, visions of perfection incompatible with human nature,

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(1) "Il ne faut pas croire que la nation fût déjà prête "pour manier dignement sa liberté. La masse avoit encore "dans l'éducation et le caractère trop de préjugés du "tems passé. Cela seroit venu, nous nous formions chaque "jour; mais nous avions encore beaucoup a gagner. Lors "de l'explosion de la Révolution, les patriotes en général, "se trouvèrent tels par nature, par instinct; ce sentiment se "trouva dans leur sang; ce fut chez eux une passion, une "frénésie; et delà l'effervescence, les excès, l'exagération "de l'époque." — Buonaparte to Las Casas, *Mémorial de St. Hélène*, tom. iv. p. 98.

a dereliction of real and experienced benefits, for untried and impossible improvements; a general discontent with the existing order of things, and violent aspirations after an imagined and visionary future.

When Voltaire, by the universality of his genius, the vivacity and the activity of his wit, and by a character singularly adapted to give to both their full effect with his countrymen — when he had roused a spirit of enquiry, and had given an irresistible impulse not only to the taste and literature, but to the general opinions of his age — another singularly-endowed being made his appearance in the domain of letters, who, scorning to address himself to the understanding, spoke directly to the heart and passions. Wielding at his pleasure the mighty force of an unexampled eloquence on the feelings of a lively and excitable people, he completed the mental revolution of France, which immediately preceded and materially contributed to the great political revolution that ensued. Rousseau, endowed with the power of conceiving and of expressing every exalted feeling of the human heart, every sentiment of noble enthusiasm, every excess of virtuous passion, every ecstatic joy and excruciating sorrow that can belong to the intellectual nature of man; Rous-

seau, thus admirable in general conceptions, and in imaginary personifications of all that was great and good, was absolutely divested of judgment in their application to real life and to his own conduct. In his writings he promulgated principles of impossible application, and covered with the magic of his imagination the weakness and the contradictions of his arguments. In his own life, and in the extraordinary and lamentable details of it which his excessive vanity induced him to record, we have the measure of his estimation, and of his adherence to truth, when he tells us, in the midst of his career, that he has fulfilled a great and noble task, in expiating his secret faults and weaknesses, by accusing himself of others more serious, of which he was not only innocent but incapable. (1) Throughout his Confessions, we see an ill-organized mind, endued with talents invariably employed to exalt human nature in the mass, and degrade it individually. An idle, lively, neglected boy, he runs away from a culpably careless father, and spends the first twenty-five years of his life a self-determined vagabond, in

(1) " Mais ici commence la grande et noble tâche que j'ai " dignement remplie, d'expier mes fautes et mes foiblesses " cachées, en me chargeant de fautes plus graves, dont j'étois " incapable, et que je ne commis jamais." — *Confessions* tom. iii. p. 120.

the commission of repeated acts of vile and voluntary baseness; in the indulgence of the most foolish and most volatile attachments to objects invariably worthless; in repeated, ungrateful neglect of many extraordinary instances of real kindness; and in an obstinate opposition to every attempt made to better his existence and to reform his propensities.

It is to be regretted, that, for the honour of human nature, we have not, and are never likely to have, the confessions of some well-constituted and ingenuous mind, having been, like Rousseau, deprived of wholesome restraint in infancy, and having, like him, alone and unassisted, to combat all the ills, the sufferings, and the passions of youth. How often, in such confessions, should we find all the noble enthusiasm of virtue, all the heroic self-devotion of friendship, all the fond visions of pure and faithful love, all the exquisite enjoyments of nature, and all the "longings after immortality," unmixed with and undisgraced by the vile propensities, the silly attachments, the insatiable vanity, the obstinate selfishness, and the perpetual inconstancy of Rousseau.

Those who were well acquainted with the national character of France, and with her government, previous to the Revolution—with the peculiarities of the one, and the principles of the

other—must soon convince themselves, that a change in the social existence of that country was inevitable, and independent of all the financial difficulties which have been supposed the principal and immediate cause of her Revolution. The nation had fairly outgrown her institutions. Vain was the endeavour to patch, and stretch, and fit them to the altered fashion of the times. The tawdry rags, covering the shackles, in spite of which she had grown up to strength and beauty, would no longer hold together. They appeared at every turn, and chafed her in every movement, and this yet more in the details of social life than in public measures. The spirit of the times, and the progress of the human mind, on the great subjects of civil liberty and government, had much circumscribed the (otherwise unlimited) power of the crown over the liberty and property of its subjects. Arbitrary imprisonments, although equally legitimate, were more rarely resorted to. Political opinions it was found no longer possible to repress. They were produced under every varied form that a popular literature could assume, to disseminate discontent through every order of the state. A lively people, already disposed to listen, were thus addressed in the language of wit and of passion. Voltaire and Rousseau had lent a voice to express feelings

which nature had implanted in every heart, and opinions which already lurked in every mind. Few were sufficiently informed to be able to detect their errors or their exaggerations; but the refined began to perceive, that the profound corruption of manners which pervaded all orders of society was adverse even to their enjoyments. (1) The enlightened were aware, that the absolute want of mutual faith entailed by such corruption, prevented all associations, depending on the confidence of man with man, for increasing the benefits and lessening the evils of social life. An ignorance of the value, an indifference to the existence, and a neglect of the practice of truth, collectively and individually, of which their government set the example, pervaded all their combinations, and paralysed all their enormous natural advantages. Hence no public banks, no companies of assurance against individual losses, no great partnerships for mutual gain, no cor-

(1) " C'est à l'excès de la dépravation, au dégoût du dés-
" ordre, à l'avilissement des mœurs, c'est au vice, enfin, qu'il
" appartient de détruire les plaisirs, et de décrier l'amour.
" On réclamera la vertu, jusqu'à un certain point, pour l'in-
" térêt du plaisir. Croyez-moi qu'il arrivera du changement,
" et peut-être en bien. Il n'y a rien, par exemple, qui soit
" aujourd'hui si décrié que l'amour conjugal. Ce préjugé
" est trop violent : il ne peut pas durer." — *Duclos, Mémoires du C^te. ***, tom. i. p. 107.

porate bodies possessing the confidence of their fellow-citizens. A tacit agreement seemed to have taken place mutually to receive and to make assertions, without enquiry into proof, but at the same time without confidence in fact, on either part.

They had not yet advanced in the doctrine of sound and useful ethics to the conclusion, that truth is, in every thing, not only the shortest but the only road to excellence—the only foundation on which any thing permanent can ever be raised; and that all ways of evading, slighting, or opposing it are, in fact, only loss of time and hinderance of business in the affairs of men.

A stronger instance can scarcely be given of the unmodified disregard to truth which had long existed in France, than the account of a duel between the Duc de Richelieu and the Comte de Gacé at the beginning of the Regency. This account is given in memoirs which, if not written by the Duc de Richelieu himself, were published in his name by some one devoted to his interests. The quarrel took place at the *Bal de l'Opéra:* the combatants left it together, and stopped to fight in the Rue St. Thomas du Louvre, one of the most public and frequented streets of Paris, surrounded by hundreds of spectators. They were both wounded, and Richelieu dangerously. The affair made such a noise from its

remarkable publicity, and the existing laws against duelling, that the Parliament of Paris thought proper to take notice of it. In the mean time, the Regent sent both the individuals without further ceremony to the Bastille. The Parliament, with the permission of the Regent, continued their proceedings, and one of their body was deputed to interrogate the principals. "Le Parlement nomma Ferrand pour nous inter-"roger, et nous *jurâmes tous deux, que nous* "*n'étions point battus en duel.*" No witnesses presented themselves, though invited. "Nos "juges étoient bien assurés que nous nous étions "battus à l'outrance. — Ensuite les preuves "du combat ne s'étant pas manifestées, le Parle-"ment nous declara absous *d'un prétendu duel,* "et je sorti de la Bastille." (1)

This absence of all regard to moral truth had communicated itself, from the maxims of their government, through all the ramifications of their private existence and affairs. It was not enough that marriage, in the upper orders of society, was generally considered as a contract, which, being made without consulting the contracting parties, gave them afterwards a tacit right to evade without reproach. Persons of the rank of nobles

(1) See *Mémoires du Duc de Richelieu*, tom. ii. p. 100.

were found vile enough to accept in marriage, and to bestow the name of wife, on those whose conduct, as well as birth, would otherwise have denied them an entrance into society. Sometimes the same disgraceful bargain was made with those of their own rank, who found a more honourable establishment difficult. The husband sacrificing at once his honour and his rights at the church-door, was sent to eat the wages of his base compliance in a distant provincial town. Here his title and his money soon procured him the good graces of some provincial beauty, who consoled him for the contempt with which he had been treated elsewhere, and whose husband imitated his own example of forbearance and submission. The sacrifice of youth and beauty was often made, and made without remonstrance, to deformity, to age, and even to imbecility, among persons equal in birth, when one of the parties had to offer the wealth or brilliant existence in society which was wanting to the other. — Even among the philosophers and reformers of the age — of those whose writings breathe nothing but the charms of conjugal fidelity, and the praises of constancy of sentiment, and purity of manners — their own lives and those of their connections prove how little impression their doctrine had made either on themselves or others.

Without adverting to the moral conduct of Rousseau, or trusting to the opprobrious characters he gives of most of his contemporaries, and of *all* his intimates, the whole of Voltaire's connexion with Madame du Chatelet; the base conduct of the caustic Duclos towards persons of his most intimate society; the adventures of the pastoral St. Lambert; the letters of Madame d'Epinay, and a crowd of other contemporary witnesses, prove not so much against the characters of the individuals, as against the total degradation of sentiment and the absence of all moral truth which had taken place universally in cultivated society. Madame du Chatelet's proficiency in mathematics and the severe studies of men seems to have secured her from no female frivolity, weakness, or inconsistency. In her conduct she proved herself without moral principle of any sort, and in the little details of life without liberality, reason, or propriety. Her passion for dress and for gaming was excessive. In the first, she made herself ridiculous from her bad taste; and in the latter, almost ruined herself by her excesses. During a residence of the court at Fontainbleau, she lost at the Queen's table, in the two or three first sittings, a thousand pounds; one half of which she contrived to force from her steward by antici-

pation on her revenues, and the other half she borrowed from Voltaire and from a Demoiselle du Thil, who seems to have been a humble but attached friend.

Not content with this loss, and supposing, like the veriest gambler, that she was to repair it by continuing to play, she again lost no less than three thousand five hundred pounds on her word. Voltaire, who had been the miserable spectator of this ruin, returned with her to Paris during the night of this last adventure, having with difficulty got together her servants, horses, &c. lodged in different parts of the town of Fontainbleau. So entirely pennyless was the whole party, that a wheel having broken near Essone, nobody had wherewithal to pay the blacksmith. He absolutely refused to let them proceed before he was satisfied for his job, and they were detained till by good luck an acquaintance of Madame du Chatelet's passing by, she borrowed the money necessary to release them.

After this adventure, she retired with Voltaire to her husband's estate at Cirey in Champagne, to economise, and to endeavour to forget her losses. She always set out on all journeys, in all weather, winter or summer, at night, without the least consideration for the servants who accompanied her, or any precaution taken about the carriage that

conveyed herself and them; although it was always overloaded by the quantity of baggage which travelled with her. On the above-mentioned journey with Voltaire to Cirey, they set out from Paris at nine o'clock of a January night, the ground covered with snow, in an old tub of a coach, loaded like a diligence,—herself, Voltaire, her femme-de-chambre, and a pile of bandboxes within, and two servants on the outside. The axle-tree broke before they arrived at Nangis, within six miles of Paris. She and Voltaire were obliged to remain seated on the cushions of the carriage placed on the snow, while a blacksmith was sent for, three miles off, to repair the carriage. So ill was he paid for his work, as well as the peasants who came to their assistance, that on the carriage breaking again before it had proceeded half a league, neither blacksmith nor peasants would return to assist till they had bargained for their remuneration.

In the whole arrangements of her household, and all domestic details, she was so shamefully penurious in her expences, that her servants have been known all to leave her at once on the eve of a removal. Their claims for an increase of wages could not even in those days have been called exorbitant; when her coachman, her two footmen, and her cook were paid at the rate of

twenty sous (10*d.*) a day, including their board wages, and her femme-de-chambre, her porter, and her upper servant thirty sous (1*s.* 3*d.*)

However much she surpassed her sex in certain powers of intellect, she seems to have partaken of the absolute want of consideration for the lower orders of society, which, in spite of Voltaire and his fellow-labourers to raise the dignity of man, and to destroy artificial differences, was still general in all immediate intercourse with the people: they seem hardly to have been considered as of the same nature with their superiors. Some curious instances of this are given in the memoirs of a valet-de-chambre of Madame du Chatelet's, lately published (1), to which the reader must be referred for the details in question; confining ourselves here to the general remark suggested by the man himself as an apology for Madame du Chatelet's conduct, in the circumstances which he recounts. "On ne se gênoit pas devant ses laquais. C'étoit "l'usage, et j'ai été à même de juger par mon "propre example, que leurs maîtresses ne les "regardoient que comme des automates. Je "suis du moins convaincu que Madame du Cha-

(1) *Mémoires sur Voltaire, et sur ses Ouvrages, par Longchamp et Wagnières.* Paris, 1826.

" telet, dans son bain, en m'ordonnant de là " servir, ne voyoit pas même en cela l'ombre " d'indécence, et que mon individu n'étoit alors " à ses yeux ni plus ni moins que la bouilloire " que j'avois à la main."

Her losses at play had not lessened her immoderate love of gaming. On her return from Cirey to Paris, she stopped at Chalons at eight o'clock in the morning, to breakfast with the bishop of that place. Her post-horses were ordered at half past nine, to carry her on: while waiting for them, she proposed a party at cards. The horses came, and were sent away again till two. By this time she had dined, and the party at cards was recommenced, which lasted till past eight o'clock at night, the post-horses and drivers having been in attendance from two o'clock till that hour.

When Voltaire first discovered her infidelity to him, and her amour with St. Lambert, they were all lodged together in the country house of Stanislaus, the Ex-King of Poland, at Commercey in Lorraine. Voltaire's rage was excessive. St. Lambert took up the matter with a high hand, and said if his conduct displeased him, he was ready to answer for it. Madame du Chatelet was much calmer, and, nothing put out, she went up to the apartment of Voltaire, and argued

the matter with him in a quite different manner, justifying her conduct, and giving her reasons for so doing. For these reasons the reader must be referred to the original work already quoted. Voltaire finished the conversation (overheard by him who reports it) with saying, " Ah! Madame, " vous aurez toujours raison; mais puisqu'il faut " que les choses soit ainsi, du moins, qu'elles ne " se passent pas devant mes yeux." The affair ended by St. Lambert making apologies to Voltaire for the impetuosity of his language, and the whole party supping together the next night as usual, at Madame de Boufflers.

St. Lambert seems to have been a much more successful lover with the ladies than with the muses, although he courted both assiduously. Of a gentleman's family in Lorraine, and in the French service, he was attached to the household of Stanislaus during his retreat at Luneville. Here he became the favoured lover of the Marquise de Boufflers, the mother to the Chevalier de Boufflers of epigrammatic memory, and the ostensible mistress of the old gouty King of Poland. His pretensions to gallantry, however, were still such as obliged the lovers to various precautions, and inconveniences of time and place; which, it would seem, the charms of the lady did not compensate to St. Lambert. No such dif-

ficulties occurred in his arrangements with Madame du Chatelet, when they were all living together under the same roof at Luneville. But the forsaken mistress, Madame de Boufler's, does not seem to have been consoled by the forsaken lover Voltaire; and was obliged for a time to confine herself to the less interesting occupation of doing the honours of his palace for the old King.

The whole of Madame du Chatelet's conduct, when she found herself with child by St. Lambert (1), was equally without delicacy or honour. She makes a confidant of her supplanted lover Voltaire, and he, together with the present incumbent St. Lambert, lays a plan to bring the husband, Mr. du Chatelet, to Cirey, that he may father the child, which Voltaire wittily observed must be placed "*au nombre des œuvres mêlées de* "*Madame du Chatelet.*" She was, it seems, persuaded that she was to die in childbed. (2) Some iced orgeat which, against the express orders of her physician, she insisted on her attendants giving her during the first days of her confinement, was supposed to have caused her death. Madame de Boufflers, and the whole company at

(1) In 1749.

(2) She was past forty-five at the time.

her supper, were all in the room when she died, according to the French fashion of leaving existence and society at the same moment. Longchamp, the author of the memoirs already cited, was then acting as valet-de-chambre to Voltaire, and was likewise present. Immediately after Madame du Chatelet expired, he was whispered by Madame de Boufflers to examine if she had not still on her finger a cornelian ring set round with small brilliants; that if she had, he was to take it off, and keep it till she sent for him. This she did the next morning, and in the presence of St. Lambert, Longchamp produced the ring, which he had taken from Madame du Chatelet's finger. Madame de Boufflers, after showing it to St. Lambert, opened a secret spring in the setting, and with a pin took from below it his portrait, which she gave him, and then returned the ring to Longchamp, desiring him to place it with the rest of her effects to be given up to M. du Chatelet. Two or three days afterwards, Voltaire desired the same Longchamp to apply to Madame du Chatelet's maid to know if this same ring remained in her hands, and if it did, he gave him directions to open it by the same means he had already seen used, to take out the portrait he would find, and to bring it to him.

Longchamp tells his master that the ring in question is already in the hands of M. du Chatelet, but that he can assure him that Voltaire's portrait is not in it. " Et comment savez-vous " cela? me dit-il. Je lui racontai ingénûment " ce qui s'étoit passé chez Madame de Boufflers, " en présence de M. de St. Lambert. O Ciel! " dit-il, en se levant et joignant ses deux mains, " Voilà bien les femmes! J'avois oté Richelieu, " St. Lambert m'en a expulsé, — cela est dans " l'ordre, — un clou chasse l'autre, — ainsi vont " les affaires de ce monde." (1)

Voltaire, it must be confessed, in all affairs where the heart came in question, seems to have had infinitely more generous and more tender sentiments than those with whom he was connected, notwithstanding his excessive irritability on all subjects connected with himself, his works, and his fame. Of this we have a remarkable instance in the letters of Madame de Grafigny. These letters, written from Cirey, at the beginning of the year 1740, give many entertaining particulars of the life of Voltaire and Madame du Chatelet in the country. Their writer was the author of the *Lettres Péruviennes*, and some other smaller works. Whatever may have been

(1) Mémoires de Longchamp.

her genius, her letters are the unaffected dictates of a heart overflowing with attachment, interest, and affection for her friends, and desirous of communicating to them all her pleasures and amusements. She had been invited from Luneville in the winter of the year 1740, at a moment when the society at Cirey was neither brilliant nor numerous. But she is proud and delighted to find herself under the same roof with Voltaire and Madame du Chatelet, then both in the zenith of their glory, and occupying the attention of all the literary world. Of the transactions of every day she writes a detailed account to one of her friends at Luneville, himself a literary man, and a minor poet. (1) To him she describes minutely the furniture, decorations and arrangements of the castle of Cirey, and every particular of the every-day life there. This life had certainly nothing to do with the habitation of the country, and might have been better followed in any town in Europe than in a chateau in Champagne. By the arrangement of the day, however, its inmates certainly obtained time for occupation in the morning. In

(1) *Panpan*, the name by which she always addresses her correspondent, was a Mr. Deveaux, who acted as secretary and reader to Stanislaus.

the evening Voltaire often submitted to the opinion of his companions some composition which the morning had produced. It is interesting, too, to observe by these details, that his mind, endued with all the various powers of a truly fertile genius, could amuse itself with any trifles; that, passing

" From grave to gay, from lively to severe,"

he was excellent at the exhibition of puppets and the management of the magic-lantern.

When the company was sufficiently numerous to admit of any dramatic entertainment, some of Voltaire's pieces were represented in a theatre in the castle, and their effect first tried on its society. He had himself great pleasure in representing characters in his own tragedies, and was delighted to assume the costumes and disguises of a theatre. The author knew an old lady at Lausanne, who was much acquainted with Voltaire, and perfectly remembered, during his occasional residence in that town, having seen him stand at his own door in the costume of the sultan in Zaire, ready for the representation of that piece long before the rest of the actors and the hour of beginning, exhibiting himself in broad daylight to the wonder and admiration of all the children and passers-

by. His acting in tragedy, the same authority stated to have been far from good, although he seems to have had very just ideas of the faults and merits of acting in others.

At Cirey Madame de Grafigny remained a delighted guest all the month of December, in spite of the various deficiencies and the excessive cold of her bed-room; for it would seem that all the luxuries and ornaments, and even common comforts of the castle, were confined to the apartments of Voltaire and of the lady. Voltaire, however, continued to treat their guest with flattering kindness, and the lady of the castle as civilly as was compatible with her imperious character. Among the works of Voltaire then on the anvil, was the *Pucelle d'Orleans*, of which the different cantos (to the disgrace of the taste and of the manners of the times) were submitted to the inspection and judgment of several of his female friends. (1) Madame de Grafigny was thus distinguished. She expresses her admiration of the wit and fancy of the author frequently in her letters to her friend at Luneville, without the smallest

(1) Grimm says, he was aided in writing it by three ladies, one of whom was still alive in 1778. — See *Grimm's Memoirs*.

feeling of the grossness and the immorality of the poem. Such were the moral effects of the age, even on a virtuous mind, capable of the most refined sentiments and the most devoted attachments!

As Voltaire had already allowed all sort of manuscript publicity to his poem, and as in France at this time the maxims of the government were in direct contradiction with the feelings of the governed, the police were on the alert to prevent its being printed or to arrest the author. An intimation to this effect had reached Cirey while Madame de Grafigny was there. Her frequent correspondence with her literary friend at Luneville was immediately construed by Madame du Chatelet into having been the cause of this denunciation. Without further ceremony or scruple, she opened Madame de Grafigny's letters, and, confirmed in her suspicions by an ambiguous phrase in a letter from her friend, she instantly raised Voltaire's too irascible mind into a ferment of passion. They both together entered the room of their unsuspecting guest, and without any other evidence on the subject than this letter obtained by treachery, addressed her in language of such indignity, and of such reproach, as would have been disgraceful to them in any circum-

stances: — far more in those in which they stood to a poor, defenceless woman, hardly removed from a dependent situation in life, and unable to fly from their rage. Voltaire's good feelings made him repent of the outrage he had committed long before the complete justification of their victim had burst on her accusers.

His conduct to her she herself represents as that of a person thoroughly ashamed, and desirous of making any reparation for having been betrayed, first into the treachery of opening her letters, and then into building totally false conclusions on a mistaken application of their contents. But the whole conduct of Madame du Chatelet, even in her tardy apologies, proves an absence of every kindly feeling, and leaves an odious impression of her honour and of her mind.

The letters of Madame d'Epinay are still stronger evidence of the moral degradation of the times, and the more so, as they describe the manners, not of the highest, but of the second order of society; of persons whose wealth entitled them to all the advantages of education, and secured to them those means of rational independence in future life, of which their superiors in rank were often deprived by their poverty and by the pensions of the Court;—of that order of

society, in short, which, in our own, and most other countries, contains by far the largest portion of the best-cultivated intellect. Madame d'Epinay was the daughter of an officer, without fortune, married to the son of a financier. She seems to have been endowed with every natural disposition towards virtue which a weak and vain mind can be supposed to possess. The convent education common to that day, and a marriage of mere interest, settled by her parents with a silly, profligate husband, threw her into a society where she found neither principles to oppose, nor fashion to restrain, the illusions of a world which was new to her ignorance, and flattering to her vanity. Within two years after her marriage to a husband, whom she begins by adoring, she yields to a lover, because she is told that no person of refined sentiments could be blamed for so doing, and that she finds all the persons of her intimate society have adopted the same doctrine. She throws herself into the hands of a female friend, who begins by confessing her own profligacy, to encourage Madame d'Epinay, and to become the confidante of her first amour — the friend having for *her* object the power of seeing her own lover in all liberty, and of securing an intimate footing in the house of a rich financier, Madame d'Epinay's father-in-law. The company

and the patronage of wits and bel-esprits was the fashion of the day. The rich financiers indulged in it, as they did in every other luxury; and the women of their society adopted it, as they did every other fashion. Madame d'Epinay was soon surrounded by Duclos, St. Lambert, Rousseau, Grimm, and a host of others, who enlisted in the corps of beaux-esprits and philosophers, as a passport to the propagation of sentiments of disbelief in the religion, and discontent with the government, of their country. In Madame d'Epinay's uninformed mind they found an easy proselyte. Rousseau shakes her belief in revealed religion, and the moral government of the world, by a bad fable (1); and preaches up the necessity of moral conduct, as a prejudice to which he advises *her* to adhere, although *he* is not happy enough to partake of it. Her mind, thus relieved from the wholesome restraints which, in any other state of society, would have carried her well-disposed character respectably through life; enlightened (as she thought) by those to whose abilities she looked up for instruction, she follows their example, and like them, while breathing sentiments of devotion to her duties, of patience with an extravagant and profligate husband, and

(1) See Madame d'Epinay's Memoirs, vol. ii. p. 77.

attachment to her children, she allows herself to be made the confidante of an intrigue of her sister-in-law with Jelyotte, a public singer. She aids their meetings, and receives them into her intimate society; and this, without even the excuse of any particular friendship for the sister-in-law, but merely as what one amiable woman of sentiment was called on to do for another. After this signal service, Madame d'Epinay finds herself entirely neglected by the two persons in question, until the lady having changed her lover, she again addresses herself with confidence to her sister-in-law, to break her infidelity to Jelyotte, to console him for it, to get back her letters and picture, and to prevent his open complaints of her inconstancy. To avoid a public discussion, and an exposure of these rapid changes in the dramatis personæ of private connexions, were the only morals of the day — the only necessary virtue, either of abstinence or charity, which was considered obligatory or estimable in the commerce of the world. To supplant each other, either in love, friendship, or affairs, was all deemed fair play. It was in the conduct afterwards that nobleness of mind and distinguished sentiments were supposed to be shown, certainly at a small expence of forbearance, for the parties were mutually allowed to console themselves as soon

and as often as they pleased. Thus, when Madame d'Epinay, tired with the infidelities of her first lover, Francueil, attaches herself to Grimm, Duclos, the cynic, the plain-spoken Duclos, who had first himself endeavoured to supplant Francueil with Madame d'Epinay, now advises her, as the only necessary precaution, to try and continue to keep on good terms with Francueil; while Duclos, vexed at his own want of success with her, transgresses his rules, and tells so much truth and so much untruth of her to Francueil and to the rest of the world, that he is formally banished from her house and society as an unsafe inmate, — a measure never resorted to but in extreme cases.

In this society Rousseau received the inspiration of what he himself calls the great and only real passion of his life — that for Madame d'Houdetot, the half sister of Madame d'Epinay. The account given in her sister's memoirs of the marriage of this young lady, before she was twenty, to a perfect stranger, both to herself and to her family, must be received as some palliation for her immediately adopting the manners of those about her, and attaching herself to St. Lambert. This attachment, in spite of Rousseau's attempt to shake its fidelity, lasted uninterruptedly to the end of their mutual and

prolonged lives. (1) It acquired by this extraordinary circumstance a respectability in the eyes of the world of that day, beyond which its sternest moralists did not even pretend to soar. Rousseau asserts, that no woman could have resolved to have destroyed such expressions of passion as his letters to Madame d'Houdetot; and that, whenever they appear, the language of his *Nouvelle Héloïse* will be thought cold and fastidious in comparison of them. It is to be feared, however, that these letters were sacrificed to her faithful attachment to St. Lambert. Yet who but must wish to have seen the inspirations of a real passion from the pen of Rousseau! except it may be supposed that, living as he did, on all subjects, in impracticable visions of his own creation, an imaginary mistress would exercise a greater power over his feelings than any real object could ever hope to obtain.

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(1) The author remembers to have seen Madame d'Houdetot in a French society at Paris, in the year 1802, and was seated next her for some time without knowing who she was. It was impossible, however, not to remark her appearance as one of the plainest old women imaginable. No opportunity occurred for conversation, as the younger part of the society was dancing, and Madame d'Houdetot retired very early on account of the severe illness of Monsieur de St. Lambert, who died the year afterwards.

His intimacy with Madame d'Houdetot ceased, from an entire absence of all reciprocity in her feelings towards him, which his never-failing vanity on these subjects construed into the most heroic triumph of constancy to her previous engagement. With Madame d'Epinay his connexion ended (as it had done with all those from whom he had received great benefits and signal kindness) by an open breach, by insulting and offensive letters, and by considering himself as the injured person, and his benefactors as the ungrateful.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE TRIBUNALS OF FRANCE, THEIR DISGRACEFUL CONDUCT. — THE PRETENSIONS OF THE PARLIAMENTS. — POLITICAL DISCUSSION BECOMES GENERAL IN SOCIETY. — EFFECTS PRODUCED BY THE GENIUS AND WRITINGS OF VOLTAIRE ON THE CHARACTER OF HIS COUNTRY. — STATE OF SOCIETY AT PARIS IMMEDIATELY PRECEDING THE REVOLUTION. — THE INFLUENCE OF WOMEN ON THE OPINIONS AND CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE TIMES. — REMARKABLE DIFFERENCE IN THE CONDUCT OF ENGLAND AND FRANCE UNDER CIRCUMSTANCES OF POPULAR EXCITATION. — EXECUTION OF FOULON. — MIXTURE OF ATROCITY AND FOLLY IN THE SUCCESSIVE DEMAGOGUES OF FRENCH LIBERTY. — CHAUMETTE. — TRIAL OF THE QUEEN. — HEBERT. — COULTRON. — ST. JUST. — COLLOT D'HERBOIS. — STRANGE INSENSIBILITY TO DEATH. — FRIVOLOUS DISCUSSIONS OF THE CONVENTION.

THE tribunals of France form a conspicuous feature in the character of these times. Without adverting to the disgraceful abuse of public justice in the cases of Calas, of Servien, and of the Chevalier de la Barre, held up to general odium by the indefatigable exertions of Voltaire,

the courts rang with trials, where redress for the most flagrant breaches of faith were vainly sought from those whose birth, connections, or favour at court secured as entirely from the action of the law as their palsied consciences did from the dictates of common honesty. Such were the trials of the Comte de Morangie, of the Duc de Richelieu with Madame St. Vincent, of the Comte de Guigne with his secretary Tot, of Beaumarchais with his client Goesman, of Mademoiselle Camp, a Protestant of respectable family at Montauban. She was married by the Protestant rites to a young man of family, pretending to be likewise a Protestant. After living together for some years publicly as man and wife, and having a child, he deserted her, married another woman at Paris, and availed himself of the laws then existing with regard to the marriages of Catholics with Protestants, to appeal to the parliament of Paris, who in the year 1772 declared the marriage null and void; and the child to be taken from its unfortunate mother, and brought up in a convent.

Even the hideous crime of murder, when committed by persons above the rank of Bourgeois, was often compounded for towards the world by every public measure being taken against the crime, while private warning secured the person

of the criminal: as in the case of the President d'Entrecasteaux, a young man of distinguished family in the robe, a president of the parliament of Aix, who in the year 1784 murdered his wife with circumstances of peculiar atrocity. Having fled on the first suspicion of the fact, the French government thought proper to engage their ministers at foreign courts to demand the delivery of the culprit wherever he might be found. He was soon detected at Lisbon, and was already secured by the Portuguese government, when a private order to the French minister desired his release, and permitted his escape from public punishment.

In a country where all rights but those of the sovereign were ill-defined, every order of the state endeavoured to arrogate to itself powers which did not belong to it, and to encroach on the competence of others. (1) Hence the interminable disputes between the church and parliaments of France, which only ceased with the existence of both parliaments and church during the Revolution. The clergy continued

(1) Voltaire remarks, " Qu'il y a autant de confusion et " d'incertitude sur tous les droits, et sur tous les titres en " France qu'il y a d'ordre dans l'administration." — *Catalogue des Ecrivans* at the beginning of the *Siècle de Louis Quatorze*.

to make an ineffectual stand for privileges and observances which the age could no longer tolerate. The strange contrast of the puerile and ostentatious observances of the forms of their religion, and its unbending intolerance, to the opinions of the age, may be some excuse (the only one that can be offered) for the scepticism and almost thoughtless neglect of all religion, which was professed by their philosophers, and copied by all the idle persons incapable of any reasoning on such subjects, and adopting blindly the fashion of the day. Voltaire, and a host of subalterns under his command, attacked with the arms of ridicule and satire the corruptions of a rich and powerful ecclesiastical establishment, which had long formed an integral part of the state. The members of that establishment, instead of disarming their enemies by liberalising their practice and purifying their conduct, intrenched themselves behind the tenets of an intolerant faith; combating with the blunted weapons of papal warfare in support of prejudices no longer believed, and privileges no longer admissible: meanwhile the eternal truths committed to their care and cultivation were overrun and confounded in the mass of errors with which they still endeavoured to cover and conceal them.

The parliaments were in their institution courts of justice and of record, to decide in the first instance civil and criminal causes in the king's name, and to register edicts, laws, and regulations respecting the circle of their jurisdiction. Louis the Fourteenth had deposited his will with the parliament of Paris, hoping, by its credit with the nation, to ensure the observance of his regulations as to the succession of his natural children to the throne. The Duke of Orleans, whose immediate interests required the possession and the abrogation of this will, flattered them to give it up. But afterwards, when counting on their compliance with his wishes, the parliament demanded an account of the revenue and of the expenditure of the king, on the occasion of enregistering an edict of finance, the Regent positively refused the information required, and soon convinced them that he would not concede, and that they had no power to enforce a single tittle derogatory to the authority of the infant king.

The bar was at this time the only medium of public speaking on secular subjects, and the law the only civil employment in which fathers were succeeded by their sons in honourable succession. Many of its members were therefore distinguished by their eloquence, their abilities,

and their integrity. When political subjects found their way into discussion in France, together with political discontent, *they* were the first, the most informed, and the boldest in their remonstrances, their advice, and their enunciation of the principles of civil liberty. But these remonstrances were all made on the false supposition, that they had a right to advise, power to threaten, and possessed the means of enforcing their opinions. The celebrated works of Montesquieu had so detailed and so exalted the advantages of a representative government, that the nation endeavoured to deceive itself into an opinion, that the parliaments had succeeded to the functions of the states general. Its members, wishing to encourage and confirm this opinion, adopted a higher tone of jurisprudence, and in their remonstrances put forward direct stipulations for certain rights of the people. In short, they wished and endeavoured to be considered as the counsellors of the monarch, and controllers of his measures, instead of being merely his servants appointed by himself to do his bidding, without any power but that of public opinion to oppose to his mandates. Instead of being the remains of a representation of the people, they were indeed a mere representation of the sovereign power,

to judge that people. " On seroient ces augustes " compagnies (says a writer towards the end " of the last century), si exactes, si scrupuleuses, " sur les formes, et les formalités, si le Roi les " sommoit de produire le titre auquel elles " prennent connoissance et demandent compte " de son administration, auquel elles se donnent " pour les représentans, et les organs de la " nation, auquel elles prétendent être quelque " chose de plus dans le royaume, que des com- " missaires subdélégués par sa majesté, pour " tenir ses livres, et travailler sur les détails " qu'elle ne juge pas à propos de se reserver? " Le vulgaire ignorant peut bien être induit à " croire que les parlemens ont succédés aux états " généraux du royaume : mais il n'y a pas un " François, médiocrement instruit, qui ne rit au " néz du parlementaire assez vain pour le lui " dire. Il n'y a pas un parlement qui ait osé " laisser entrevoir cette prétention. En effet, " qu'y auroit-il de plus capable de ravaler et " de révolter une si nombreuse nation, que " l'ideé d'avoir pour son représentant un petit " nombre d'hommes, tirés d'une seule de ces " classes, et qui bien loin d'être des gens de son " choix, sont mis en place sans sa participation? " Y auroit-il rien de plus absurde en politique, " que de tenir pour avoués, à lutter contre le

" Roi pour la nation, ou à concourir avec le " Roi au nom de la nation, des hommes pourvus " de leur emploi, conservés dans leur emploi, " amovibles et révocables de leur emploi, par " le choix, la faveur, le bon plaisir du Roi? " Ne sont-ce pas les gens du Roi, les serviteurs du Roi?" (1) And so they proved themselves at the beginning of the popular movements in France. When called upon to enregister the King's declaration for the assembly of the states general in 1789, they demanded for the price of their compliance, that the Tiers Etats should be no more numerous than the other two orders, and that they should vote separately.

This gave the first signal of open war between the great body of the nation on one side, and every privileged class on the other. The people saw their rights abandoned in the most essential circumstances by the parliament, whom they had hitherto considered as their protectors. The younger members of that body, partaking of the general enthusiasm of the moment, lost sight of

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(1) *Lettres du Chevalier Robert Talbot, de la suite du Duc de Bedford à Paris en* 1762, *sur la France, &c. &c. mises en Français par Monsieur Maubert de G———, Secrétaire du feu Roi Electeur Auguste.* Amsterdam, 1767. Under this disguise, a very well-informed French writer has given facts and opinions which he could not, in those days, have announced with impunity otherwise.

l'esprit du corps in the brilliant career they saw opening to their talents and to their ambition, and thenceforth became almost all strenuous advocates of the popular cause.

One of the first decrees of the constitutional assembly was superseding the whole functions of the parliaments of France, and resolving on an entirely new system in the administration of justice. (1) That of the twelve stationary judicatures, as then constituted, had already received a severe shock, from the attack made on the whole body, during the administration of the Duc d'Aiguillon in 1771, by the chancellor Maupeou. This man, whose plans were as bold and bad as his means were base and servile, had succeeded in persuading the weak and indolent Louis the Fifteenth, that the moment was at last come when, by a vigorous exertion of his authority, he might for ever get rid of the trouble-

(1) By a decree of the 3d of November, 1789. By another decree of the 15th of December of the same year, all the members of the parliaments who had protested against the decree of the 3d of November are formally deprived of their rights of citizens. By a decree of the 4th of March, 1790, the *Chambre des Vacations* of the parliament of Bourdeaux (that is to say, the provisional tribunal supplying the place of the parliament) was deprived of the rights of citizenship for having refused to register the decree of the 3d of November, 1789.

some opposition of the parliament of Paris, together with its assumed right of giving the force of laws to all the financial edicts of the crown. He at the same time encouraged the parliament in the belief, that, by an obstinate and unaccommodating assertion of their supposed power, they would increase their popularity with the nation, and finally triumph over the weakness of the King. The parliament, with many fine phrases about rights and liberties (by which they meant their own), positively refused to comply with the injunctions laid on them by the King in person, to cancel their former proceedings against the Duc d'Aiguillon for misgovernment in the province of Brittany, and to abstain from all future discussion on the charge that had been preferred against him. These injunctions were reiterated by the King, with every mark of contempt for their contumacy. The parliament hereupon suspended their functions. This was the point to which Maupeou wished to lead them. Troops were sent to shut the gates of the courts of justice, and to conduct all presiding in them into exile in different parts of the country. The princes of the blood, and many of the peers, espoused the cause of the parliament, and entered protests against these measures, partly from the fashion of the day fa-

vouring liberal ideas, partly from the mistaken belief that the parliaments protected such ideas. Voltaire and some of the philosophers, from the same mistaken ideas, sided with Maupeou; as they gave him credit for intentions of which he was incapable, and were themselves duly sensible of the vices of the old administration of justice.

But the princes and peers soon grew tired of opposition and retirement, and the magistrates of exile and idleness. Before the end of 1771, the whole of the parliaments of France were dissolved, and such only of their members re-employed as would enter the newly-composed courts established by the chancellor for the administration of justice. (1) Had these measures been wisely followed up, by abolishing torture, proscribing punishments of excessive cruelty, allowing the accused counsel, and giving publicity to trials—in short, by a timely revision of the criminal laws—the new tribunals, constituted to replace the parliaments, would have become popular, the people would have conceived that they had gained by the change, and the old parliaments

(1) They were called *conseils supérieurs*, and were established in the towns of Arras, Artois, Blois, Chalons sur Maine, Clermont, Lyon, and Poitiers.

would have been consigned to the neglect which, as a body, they deserved, by their opposition to all progressive enlargement of mind and freedom of thought. But in this operation of Maupeou's. " tout ce que pouvoit intéresser la nation fut " écarté. Le Roi ne paroissoit revendiquer que " la plénitude du pouvoir législatif, pouvoir que " la doctrine de la nécessité d'un enregîtrement " libre (1) transfera, non à la nation, mais aux " parlemens; et il étoit aisé de voir, que ce " pouvoir réuni à la puissance judicaire la " plus étendue, partagé entre douze tribunaux " perpétuels, tendoit à établie en France une " aristocratie tyrannique, plus dangereuse que " la monarchie pour la sureté, la liberté, la " propriété des citoyens. On pouvoit donc " compter sur les suffrages des hommes éclairés, " sur celui des gens de lettres, que le parlement de " Paris avoit également blessé par la persécution " et par le mépris, par son attachment aux pré- " jugés, et par son obstination à rejetter toute " lumière nouvelle." (2) But at this time, although late in the reign of Louis the Fifteenth, the first great principles of legislation and of go-

(1) Of all financial edicts.

(2) *Vie de Voltaire*, prefixed to Beaumarchais' Edition of his works in octavo.

vernment had only found their way from the cabinets and the writings of the men of letters to the societies which they frequented, where the adoption and display of such principles served to enliven conversation, to animate debate, to give a reputation of liberality and patriotism to some *Grand Seigneurs philosophes*, and afford an honourable retreat for the amour propre of some superannuated coquettes.

To society, indeed, these discussions were an essential advantage. Its most brilliant period in France was, doubtless, the last years of its existence, before the general dispersion caused by the Revolution. Important subjects were then occupying very superior minds. Those who entertained them were aware that it was for the interest of such subjects that they should be discussed, and popularised in general society. A new era had arisen in science. The study of chemistry was not confined to the professors of those arts which most particularly profited by its discoveries. It was no longer pursued only in seclusion from the world, by poring over crucibles, and dedicating the whole of life to the tedious progress of a series of experiments. The results of these experiments, and the great discoveries of Lavoisier and of Chaptal, were made popular in lectures from Lyceums, and

spread by elementary books, till chemistry became a fashionable amusement among those with whom it was never likely to be further pursued. The results of the analysation of air begun by Dr. Priestley and Dr. Black were first applied to aerostation in France. The brilliant experiments to which it led were then new, and had opened to all lively imaginations a thousand interesting consequences, which experience alone could destroy. The writings of Montesquieu, of Voltaire, and of Rousseau had thrown new lights on a thousand topics, which, although all connected with the great political interests of the moment, had not then degenerated into party rage, nor been disgraced by party vengeance.

It is remarkable that, with these new habits of enquiry and discussion on important subjects in France, had arisen a disposition to enthusiasm, and an extraordinary power of belief in every thing, except in what their fathers had believed. The blind faith, formerly confined to the mysterious dogmas of their church, now extended itself (or rather changed its object) to all other subjects of enquiry, on which they swallowed difficulties and believed in supposed facts quite as mysterious and incomprehensible as transubstantiation. Unaccustomed to patient investi-

gation, they generalised every subject, and found supposed analogies between material and moral nature almost always erroneous. Thus, the long-abandoned nonsense of the general influence of the magnet was revived by the ignorant empiric Mesmer, who persuaded thousands of what he called the "*secret of nature,*" founded on a supposed analogy between the well-known and well-defined properties of the loadstone and of the electric fluid, with this mysterious *universal fluid* whose powers escaped all analysis, but which, according to his doctrine, ruled not only the stars, but the animal, vegetable, and mineral kingdoms.

About the same time, a peasant of Burgundy, of the name of Bleton, instigated perhaps by those who knew more of the matter than himself, appeared with the exploded notion of the divinatory wand to discover hidden sources of water. If he began by deceiving others, he soon deceived himself. He seemed astonished at his own powers, when the miraculous rod turned voluntarily round on his fingers. The art of quickening at pleasure the motion of his heart he certainly possessed, as he made his pulse keep pace with the volutions of the divining rod. He was led about from château to château in the neighbourhood of Paris. All went well, until many

among those who consulted him found, on taking the miraculous rod into their own hands, that, as far as its movement gave the power of discovering hidden springs, they possessed it as much as the professor himself. But, while astonished and almost frightened at their own powers, their opinion was much lowered of poor Bleton, who soon sunk into insignificance, and his science into contempt.

Madame de Stäel (a partial observer of the society out of which she thought there was no desirable existence) declares that in France, "Il y a sur chaque sujet tant de phrases toutes "faites, qu'un sot, avec leurs secours, parle "quelque tems assez bien, et ressemble momen-"tanément à un homme d'esprit." With this assistance the discussion of systems of government, and systems of education, the criticism and the abuse of the national music and of the national religion, took place in every drawing-room in Paris.

A talent for conversation and for colloquial elegance of expression had long been cultivated, not only as an accomplishment, but as a means of success in life. A bon-mot, a diverting story, a laughable naïveté of somebody unaccustomed to Paris, well recounted, were rewarded with applause hardly less flattering than that of the

theatre. Many persons were eagerly on the watch for such materials to work on. A power of making the most of them was the art of being popular and fashionable in society; for an art it must be called, as no one scrupled to add whatever they thought necessary to give effect to their tale.

To be in fashion (*d'être à la mode*) was the highest dignity society could confer. It was absolute power while it lasted, during which the possessor could do no wrong; but "ere well" the pleasing state "was felt, 'twas o'er." It was acquired by a thousand means, but was to be retained by none. Both sexes were equally susceptible of its honours; and it must not be supposed that wit, or beauty, or talents alone shared them. A well-chosen dress at some great fête, a lively exercise of some trifling acquirement, a happy sally in conversation, an appearance of naïveté in a rank or situation in which it is rarely found, or a neglect of the established and arbitrary code of etiquette in dress or manner, and a thousand other such trifles, were all capable of conferring this capricious supremacy. Lord Orford, in a letter from Paris to Gray the poet in 1766, gives a ludicrous account of his possession of it, on occasion of his supposed letter from the King of Prussia to

Rousseau, and of the manner in which it passed away from him. (1)

" Mais alors on rioit de tout en France, surtout " dans un certain ordre de personnes. Hommes " et femmes également spirituels, également " ambitieux, ne connoissaient d'occupation que " l'intrigue et la galanterie. On ne sembloit " éprouver que deux besoins,—celui d'échapper " à l'ennui, et d'avancer sa fortune. Un désir " ardent de plaire et de briller prêtait à la con- " versation, sur quelque sujet qu'elle s'arrêtât, le " ton du badinage ou de la raillerie. L'habitude " de s'observer entre eux, pour se flatter ou pour " se nuire donnait aux gens du monde une rare " aptitude à peindre d'un seul trait les ridicules " ou le travers." (2)

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(1) " You must not attribute my intimacy with Paris to " curiosity alone; an accident unlocked the door for me. " That *passe-partout*, called the fashion, has made them fly " open. And what do you think was that fashion?—I, my- " self. Yes, like Queen Elinor in the ballad, I sunk at " Charing Cross, and have risen in the Fauxbourg St. Ger- " main.—Thank the Lord, though this is the first month, " it is the last week of my reign, and I shall resign my " crown with great satisfaction to a bouillie of chesnuts " which is just invented, and whose annals will be illus- " trated by so many indigestions, that Paris will not want " any thing else these three weeks."—*Lord Orford's Works*, vol. v. p. 367.

(2) *Essai sur les Mœurs et Usages du Dix-septième Siècle*, prefixed to the Mémoires de Brienne, tom. i. p. 108.

The theatre still continued to furnish a constant and ever-renewed subject of conversation. Discussion on dramatic authors, and their works, required just such a degree of literature as all Frenchmen of good company were now supposed to possess. But even that moderate portion of reading was by no means universal; and those are still living who may remember, that a lively and brilliant member of their society, after listening at the theatre for some moments to the harmonious verses of Racine's Andromaque exclaimed, "Ce sont de beaux vers! qui a fait "ça, Madame?"

Madame de Stäel has said, that few people read any work in France but to talk of it; before her day, before Voltaire and Rousseau had made reading fashionable, the same order of persons talked, and talked well, without any assistance at all from books. It is quite remarkable what agreeable, rational, conversible, and even well-informed persons Frenchmen became, after the middle of life, having received no early education but what was to be acquired from an abbé for tutor in the paternal house, or following the public lectures of a college under the same tuition. After this employment of the first fourteen or fifteen years of life, their time was immediately divided between the idleness of a garrison and the futilities of a

court. Of such was composed the first society in France, and hence was selected her generals, her statesmen, and the dignitaries of her church. The men of letters formed a class apart; they were admitted to a footing of equality in the drawing-rooms of their superiors, because absolutely precluded from the possibility of rivalling them elsewhere. If born, as most of them were, in the middle or lower orders of society, they could neither rise by regular service to commands in the armies of France, nor soar above the rank of secretary in her diplomacy, and were precluded from every post of honour, either at her court or in her provinces.

It was under these chilling circumstances that the d'Alemberts, the Diderots, the Champforts, the Marmontels, and the Morrellets, by dint of much mental labour, a careful cultivation of their own powers of mind, severe privations in their early youth, and generally by long obscurity in the outset of their career, rose to distinction. The social equality this distinction conferred must have made them doubly sensible to all the more material distinctions which the institutions of their country denied them. No wonder, therefore, at their often exaggerated opinions on the abuses of her government and religion; no wonder, when the struggle was once

begun between the body of the people and the privileged classes, that the men of letters threw the whole weight of their influence into the scale of the party to which they naturally belonged. As little wonder can be excited, that in such a struggle against such opponents, they were immediately successful.

If the men of the privileged classes often surprised by the manner in which they contrived to supply the insufficiency and the neglects of their education, the endowments of the women were yet more extraordinary. Universally educated in convents, which they only left at the age of fifteen or sixteen to be married to a husband of the choice of their parents, after the first year of their marriage, they were launched into a world of which they were perfectly ignorant; yet within a short time afterwards many of them became lively, intelligent companions, interested in all the great interests of society, capable of nice discrimination of character, and admirers of whatever was admirable in taste and in literature. The society of men of letters, which they sought as a fashion, aided them to supply the defects of their early instruction, and, together with the more efficient education given by the world, in the progress of human life, prepared them, when the age of admiration was over, to become the

rational and attached friends of those whom they had charmed by the more frivolous attractions of their youth. In old age, they retreated into their own houses. Here, surrounded by a much smaller circle, of which they were the centre, the attentions of their children or nearest relations were seldom wanting to them. Were this picture contrasted with that of Englishwomen of the same period, the comparison would not be in their favour. The Englishwoman was (as at present) almost always educated at home, and seldom married till near, or past twenty; when her education was over, and when time had been allowed to cultivate her talents, and to form her character. Her marriage was always with her approbation, generally of her choice. With all these advantages, in much the same time which raised the Frenchwoman to the rank of an intelligent social being, the Englishwoman too often sunk into a gossiping housewife. Neglecting all the smaller graces of life, she boasted that she cared for nothing on earth but her husband and children, considered ignorance of the world as a proof of superior virtue, and narrow-mindedness as a qualification of her sex: or if her disposition took a livelier turn, her vapid and vulgar pursuit of pleasure, and ideas of society, were circumscribed to being always in a crowd,

to visiting in the greatest number of houses, and receiving the greatest number of people in her own; weighing the merits of those with whom she associated by no other scale than the entertainments that they gave, and being as unfit as she was unwilling ever to find herself in any society small enough to admit of further distinction than that of "black, brown, or fair."

To these characters there were doubtless innumerable exceptions: many Englishwomen were already distinguished as much by their accomplishments as by their virtues; and many Frenchwomen fluttered through a youth of folly and dissipation to a neglected and contemptible old age.

It must be here remarked, and the remark is decisive, of the relative moral feelings of the two countries—that a Frenchwoman of high rank and great connexions, possessing the means of an agreeable independent existence, whatever might have been the errors and misconduct of her youth, had it in her power, by various ways in later life, to regain her respectability, and reinstate herself in her former social existence. No Englishwoman could ever hope to do the same: her youthful errors separated her for ever from her former self:

> "In vain with tears her loss she might deplore;
> "She sunk, like stars, that fall to rise no more."

On the female world of France, thus constituted, burst forth the doctrines of Rousseau, promulgated in language which captivated the passions of those whose understandings might sometimes have detected his sophisms. The effect was incalculable: maternal love became as much a fashion as soon afterwards balloons and animal magnetism. Every body was to suckle, and every body was to educate their children, however disqualified, either by nature or circumstances, from the power of doing either. Swaddling-clothes and convents were equally abjured, and all the female world professed feelings, which, if they had been acted upon, would have swallowed up every other social duty. But the whole edifice of society, as it was then constructed, and their own previously-established habits, counteracted excesses neither the less dangerous nor the less ridiculous for proceeding from a right principle.

The many strange anomalies which existed in the manners of France (1) before her Revolution

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(1) Voltaire thus states some of these anomalies with his usual acuteness: — " Il n'y a, je crois, nul pays au monde, " où l'on trouve tant de contradictions qu'en France. Ail- " leurs, les rangs sont réglés, et il n'y a point de place " honorable, sans des fonctions qui lui sont attachés: mais " en France un Duc et Pair ne sait pas seulement la place

formed a part, and a very efficient part, of the discordance between her habits and her feelings, between her opinions and her institutions, which led to the entire subversion of the latter.

The Revolution opened an endless field to the intriguing habits of the sex in France. Before the first excesses began, and while the Revolution was still confined to opinions, the exaggerated sentiments of the women, both for and against the popular cause, did much harm to the parties they espoused. Every saloon in Paris became an arena, where the arguments for the old and the new systems were brought forward with an extravagance on the one side, and repelled with a violence and a contempt on the other, which the guillotine had not yet silenced. Those adopting the sentiments of the popular party beheld schemes of Utopian perfection about to be realised, where the others saw nothing but the extinction of all European civilisation. The

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" qu'il a dans le Parlement. Le président est méprisé à la " cour précisément parce qu'il possède une charge qui fait " sa grandeur à la ville. Un évêque prêche l'humilité (si " tant est qu'il prêche); mais il vous refuse sa porte, si " vous ne l'appellez pas monseigneur. Le chancelier n'a " pas l'honneur de manger avec le Roi, et il précède tous " les Pairs du royaume. Le Roi donne des gages aux co- " médiens, et le curé les excommunient," &c. — *Voltaire, Lettres*, tom. lii. p. 69.

feelings of both were excited and embittered by all the individual advantages which were to be lost or to be gained by the prevalence of their opinions, to which must be added the re-action of long-repressed vanity, and long-suffered mortifications on the one side, and of attachment to long-enjoyed privileges and gratifications on the other. Many of the great aristocratical ladies, after the brilliant period of youth and youthful attractions was over, found themselves, from their rank and connexions, still surrounded by a large circle, assiduously frequented by their old admirers and friends, from habit and similarity of taste: by the young of both sexes to form their manners, and by the men of letters to form their taste. A more enviable retreat for female vanity and self-importance can hardly be imagined! Their opinion was often taken on credit of works of genius, before they were submitted to the public, and their verdict established many a reputation both for talents and beauty, which would never have been obtained without their assistance.

No wonder such persons saw, in the abolition of lettres de cachet and signorial rights, and in the union of the three chambers of deputies, the extinction of all taste and selection in private life, and of all order and well-being in politics. No wonder that the last efforts of their power

were employed in influencing the men of their society to oppose doctrines, which many of those men were too ignorant to defend on broader and more general principles. Among the women of rank, those who professed enlarged views and popular feelings were so abused by their own cast, and their conduct and sentiments so falsified, that they could not always avoid adopting more than they intended of the opinions of the opposite party, and sided with their enemies, because expelled by their friends. All the women who, in the second order of society, were the friends and companions of the men of letters, and whose minds and sentiments had been improved and cultivated by their company — all these, besides their general views of public advantage, had their own individual reasons for forwarding by every means in their power the destruction of certain artificial barriers, which had sometimes stopped them in the career of female distinction, and often mortified them in the smaller details of private life.

In the dreadful scenes of licence and anarchy which ensued, the women of all the lower classes displayed a disgraceful superiority in violence and cruelty. It may be urged, on the other side, that during the whole course of the political con-

vulsions of their country, it is among the women of all ranks that are likewise to be found the most remarkable instances of heroic courage, of incorruptible faith, and of patient self-devotion.

But these, experience teaches, belong to the sex in general whenever placed in circumstances where the vivacity and mobility of their feelings are strongly excited, and the powers of their minds left unfettered by the accustomed trammels of society.

It is not meant here to recall to the fatigued remembrance the horrors that accompanied the political agitations of the first twelve years of the French Revolution, when crime became familiar, and almost ridiculous, from the egregious folly that often accompanied it, and folly became odious, from the atrocious crimes it often dictated. It is our business only to observe on the remarkable differences in the conduct and feelings of England and France under similar circumstances of popular excitation, and its effects on the social life and character of the two nations.

During the whole period which elapsed in England from the meeting of the long parliament in 1642 to the Restoration of the house of Stuart in 1660, while the political discontents of the nation were increassd by the strong excitement of religious differences — while it was

agitated by two sects equally enemies to each other, and to the established worship of the country, — but one solitary instance can be adduced of assassination from political or religious motives, — that of Sharpe, Archbishop of St. Andrew's in Scotland, — nor of the people forcing the arm of power, and taking punishment into their own hands. The occasional rencontres of the military with the conventiclers and religious enthusiasts of that nation collected in arms to support their covenant, and defend themselves from the establishment of episcopacy, cannot be called individual murder or private revenge. The national character of England suffered much more from the abuse of juridical power and of the forms of law under the re-establishment of the House of Stuart, than it did during the most agitated moments of civil dissension.

Charles the First, while yet in possession of undisputed power, when he made his fatal attempt on the individual liberty of his subjects in the person of five members of the House of Commons, came himself, and openly demanded them of the body of which they formed a part: when they were as openly withdrawn from his indignation, he found no power to further its effects, nor no individuals to espouse its cause.

When religious fanaticism at its height in Edinburgh forcibly rejected in a popular tumult the form of worship which the government had dictated, joint stools and benches were the missile weapons which served the wrath of the triumphant party; but the dagger was as little thought of as the lamp-post by either side. When their fanatical associates in England defaced the magnificent Gothic cathedrals, which, having been constructed for the Roman Catholic religion, recalled to them all its abuses, the ministers who officiated in these cathedrals, although suspected of wishing to recall such abuses, were left unmolested.

When the infatuated James the Second had abandoned his metropolis, and it was known that no accommodation was on foot between him and the Prince of Orange, already in the heart of the kingdom — while a habit of obedience to the laws was in fact the only executive government in London — a rabble of apprentices and populace assembled in crowds and broke the windows of such houses as they believed harboured priests or papists, not sparing even those of foreign ministers; but no one was killed except by accident, few houses were burnt, and still fewer robberies committed.

Even Jefferies, the hated Jefferies, who was

known to have been the ready and unrelenting engine of the misgovernment of his master, and had outraged the laws committed to his administration, when he was discovered in Wapping, under the disguise of a sailor, endeavouring to make his escape from a justly-irritated people, — even he was only kicked and cuffed about by the mob, and carried by them immediately before the Lord Mayor (Sir John Chapman), who they insisted should commit him to the Tower.

In France, at the first tumultuous meetings at the Hôtel de Ville, the lamp-iron was unhesitatingly resorted to, to inflict summary punishment on those who had fallen under the displeasure of the mob; and the first proof of their having always within their reach so ready an engine to execute the dictates of their savage vengeance was received with universal acclamation. The lamp-iron yet remains at the corner of the Place de Grêve, to which Foulon (one of the first who thus perished) was suspended in July, 1790. He had been joint Secretary at War after the first exile of Neckar. He knew himself to be so unpopular, both from a reputation of avarice, and from professing despotic sentiments, that he had circulated a report of his own death by apoplexy,

and had concealed himself in a country-house at Viry, about four leagues from Paris. The syndic of the village arrested him, and sent him under an escort of the inhabitants to Paris. They obliged him to walk on foot the whole way during the night. He had been reputed to say, that "*un royaume bien administré étoit celui où le peuple broute l'herbe des champs*, and that if he were minister, *il feroit manger de foin aux François:* his tormentors, therefore, put a collar of *nettles* round his neck, gave him a nosegay of *thistles*, and loaded him with *hay* on his back. Thus accoutred he was conducted to the Hôtel de Ville, where every effort was made in vain by the magistrates to save him from the popular fury. In vain La Fayette harangued, in vain the wretched man showed himself at the windows in the power of the police, and willing to be conducted to prison. The mob overpowered all resistance, broke into the Hôtel de Ville, and dragged their victim to the lamp-iron. Here his sufferings were prolonged by the rope twice breaking; and while a new rope was sought, he lay near a quarter of an hour on the pavement where he had fallen, overwhelmed with blows and outrages from the infuriate populace, who, after at

last hanging him, cut off his head, and paraded it through the streets of Paris.

During all the similar horrors that followed in rapid succession, the daily pages of the Moniteur (certainly a faithful chronicle of the deeds of the day) recorded at the same moment the follies of children intermixed with the crimes of madmen. On the very same day that the National Assembly bestowed the ridiculous title of *orator of the human race* on a mad Prussian, who had already changed his name of *John Baptist* Cloots to that of *Anacharsis*, to avoid (as he professed) a Christian appellation — on that same day, the 21st June, 1790, the same assembly, with hardly more deliberation, annihilated by a single vote nobility in France (as far as titles can annihilate nobility.) A prohibition against any one being in future called by any title or distinction of honour was moved by a Mr. Lambert de Villefranche en Rourge. His motion was immediately supported by Mr. Charles Lameth, and, alas! by La Fayette. Four persons, among whom we find the name of the Abbé Maury, spoke against the efficacy of the motion, requested a second hearing, and defended the cause of their cast. But the question was so violently called for as to deprive others of the power of being heard, and the de-

cree was made with such applause as to preclude all future debate.

Two years afterwards, when the assembly was occupied with the trial of the Brissotin party, — a trial which involved the political existence and life of sixty-two of the most leading of its members, whose condemnation delivered over the country to all the ruthless horrors of anarchy, — when deputations from the sections of Paris, not satisfied with the long list of victims daily sent to the guillotine, were insisting on the institution of twelve ambulatory tribunals, who, by way of simplifying the work of slaughter, were to be authorized to judge and condemn *without any other forms than those they should think necessary for their own conviction;* Chaumette, the Procureur Général of the commune of Paris, at the head of the deputation, advocates the measure in the following address to that party in the Convention of which he was himself a worthy member: " Et vous, " Montagne, à jamais célèbre dans les pages " de l'histoire, soyez le Sinai des François, lan- " cez au milieu des foudres les décrets éternels " de la justice, et de la volonté du peuple. " Inébranlable au milieu des orages amoncélés " par l'aristocratie, agitez-vous et tressaillez à la " voix du peuple! Assez long-tems le feu con-

" centré de l'amour du bien public a bouilloné
" dans vos flancs. Qu'il fasse une irruption
" violente ! Montagne sainte ! devenez un volcan
" dont les laves brûlantes détruisent à jamais
" l'espoir du méchant, et calcinent les cœurs où
" se trouve l'idée de la royauté. Plus de
" quartier, plus de miséricorde aux traîtres.
" Jettons entre eux et nous les barrières de
" l'éternité." (1)

It must be confessed, that the homely metaphors of our pulpit in 1642, of which some specimens have been given in the foregoing pages, and all that pulpit aspired to produce on its audience, sink before this open exhortation to anarchy and slaughter. But we find in the language of both, the same senseless violence, the same abjuration of all reason in argument, and all taste in expression, and even the same abuse of scriptural ideas. Our sectaries, indeed, estranged from the world, and uninformed by its intercourse, preached up insurrection as a duty towards God, but confined their malevolence and their vengeance to the creeds and consciences of their opponents; while the French demagogues, having formally deposed God, and dispensed with all creeds, laboured to assert their own

(1) Moniteur, September 7. 1793.

omnipotence in evil, and assuming to themselves the avenging power, gave a salutary example of what that power becomes in any human hands.

In the same sitting in which this exhortation to murder had been addressed with such vehemence to willing hearers, the same orator requests them to turn their attention to the garden of the Tuilleries (1), that former domain of the crown, on which the eyes of republicans can only repose with pleasure when it is made to produce useful crops, and medicinal plants, that may be wanted in the hospitals, instead of leaving the statues and other objects which fed the luxury and pride of kings!

It has been said, that the Jacobin party purposely mixed these trifles with their most violent measures, as Cromwell drew the pen across Desbrow's face, when signing the death-warrant of Charles the First, by way of preventing a too serious consideration of what they were doing.—

(1) " Nous vous prions de jetter vos regards sur cet im-
" mense jardin des Tuilleries: les yeux des républicains se
" reposeront avec plus de plaisir quand il produira des objets
" de première nécessité. Ne vaut-il pas mieux faire croître
" des plantes dont manquent les hôpiteaux, que d'y laisser
" des statues, des lys, et autres objets, aliment du luxe et de
" l'orgueil des rois ? — *Dessault* demande que les Champs
" Elysées soient en même tems que les Tuilleries convertis
" en culture utile."— *Moniteur*, Sept. 7. 1793.

But in France the habits and disposition of the country dispensed with the necessity of such precautions. We look with surprise at the number of theatres open every night in Paris, and the various meetings for dancing and amusement, during the dreadful years 1793, 4, and 5, when the population was decimating by the guillotine, the tocsin for ever ringing in their ears, the drum beating to arms, and the domicile of every one liable to be entered nightly by an armed force, competent to drag them to almost immediate slaughter. (1)

It has been the object of many of the French writers on their Revolution to attempt to prove that most of the atrocities which accompanied it were excited by foreign agents, paid for by foreign money, and often executed by foreign hands. But the overflowing population of such a city as Paris, called out of the abject political existence which we have endeavoured to show belonged to them before the Revolution, — this

(1) Gensonné (one of the Brissotins) had obtained a decree against " des visites domiciliaires et des arrestations " pendant la nuit." Billaud de Varennes, on the fourth September, 1793, succeeded in reversing the decree, saying, " Il faut que nous allions démêler nos ennemis dans leurs " tanières. A peine la nuit et le jour suffisent-ils pour les " arrêter." — *Moniteur*, Sept. 7. 1793.

population, excited by men who, educated in the habits of despotism, found themselves suddenly in possession of the power under which they had often smarted — surely these causes will be judged more efficient in producing all the excesses which ensued, than any extraneous assistance that can be imagined to have prompted or abetted them. Was it England, was it the despotic governments of the continent, was it her brother and nephew on the throne of Austria, that forced the representatives of the people to bring to a sham trial the wretched widow of Louis the Sixteenth? Was it the gold of Pitt that procured the death of his ill-fated son by the slow and cruel means of ill-usage, and every species of moral and physical neglect? Was it the intrigues of the Spanish branch of the Bourbons which influenced the unnoted condemnation of the exemplary but insignificant sister of Louis the Sixteenth, known only by her devoted attachment to those who had perished before her? Doubtless all the privileged classes in France, whose ignorance and whose prejudices had, in the first instance, prevented their advancing with the advancing spirit of the age, and, in the second instance, had betrayed into the irrecoverably false step of emigration; all these persons, doubtless, endeavoured to

regain the power they had lost by the same wretched means they had employed to retain it, — by false statements both of their moral and physical strength to the governments to whom they applied for assistance, and to their country by promises never meant to be kept, by a substitution of phrases for facts, and by offering as favours what were demanded as rights, — always with the false and weak idea, that by corruption, treachery, and intrigue, they could succeed in re-instating themselves, and in forcing the majority of a great and informed people again to submit to the uncontrolled government of an ignorant and selfish minority.

The conduct of the surrounding governments of Europe towards the French nation at this period brought with it (as regarded themselves) the heavy punishments due to folly, credulity, and prejudice, but must not therefore be branded with the opprobrious crimes of republican France.

Without comparing the conduct of the two nations in bringing their chief magistrate to a public trial and execution — a conduct which, although unauthorized by any law, or justified by any necessity, may, in the hands of Providence, have, in both cases, been productive of some good, which formed no part of the mo-

tives of the persons concerned in it; — however this may be, the trial and execution of the unfortunate Marie Antoinette leaves an unqualified and undivided disgust on the mind; a certain feeling of humiliation at belonging to the same nature with those capable of being betrayed into such excesses. Neither the history of our own, nor that of any other civilised country, produces any thing to compare with this useless, this voluntary atrocity; whether we consider the situation, the character, the feelings, and the faults of the individual, or the nullity and perfect vagueness of the accusations brought against her, or the puerile, irregular, lawless manner in which they were supported. Dulaure, an author who will not be suspected of partiality to royalty, says of this trial, " En ne l'envi-" sageant que sous les rapports politiques, cette " mort infligée à la Reine de France, Marie " Antoinette, étoit une grande faute, privoit la " nation Françoise d'un gage dont cette nation " eut pu tirer un grand avantage, et d'un ôtage " précieux."

The manner of conducting the trial was no less disgraceful than its event. Any spectator was allowed to become a witness, and any witness to bring forward any report, not only of their own opinions, but of the opinions

of others. The President (Hermann) thus examines an officer of the police who had been on service at the Temple during the confinement of the prisoner, but had absolutely denied having had any communication with her. — Président. " Quelle est votre *opinion* de l'ac- " cusée ?"—" Si elle est coupable, elle doit être " jugée." — Prés. " *La croyez-vous patriote ?*" " Non." — Prés. " Croyez-vous *qu'elle veuille* " *la République ?*" — " Non." (1)

The Comte d'Estaing, called as a witness of inculpation, it is satisfactory to find not sullying his honour by any base compliances with the desire of the wretches in whose power his own life stood, as well as that of the Queen. His evidence must be given in his own words. " Il déclare qu'il " connoît l'accusée depuis qu'elle est en France, " qu'il a même à se plaindre d'elle, mais il n'en " dira pas moins la vérité, qui est, qu'il n'a rien à " dire contre l'acte d'accusation." On being questioned as to what passed at Versailles when the royal family were brought to Paris, he said, " J'ai " entendu des conseillers de cour dire à l'accusée " que le peuple de Paris arrivoit pour la massa- " crer, et qu'il falloit qu'elle partît. A quoi " elle avoit répondu avec *un grand caractère*,

(1) Moniteur, October 15. 1793.

" ' Si les Parisiens viennent ici pour m'assassiner, " c'est aux pieds de mon mari que je le serai, " mais je ne fuirai pas.' " This *grand caractère* seems to have had not the smallest effect on her brutalised judges, although her whole conduct during the trial confirmed the assertion. It was admirable — it was above her character, until that character had been tried and fortified by her cruel misfortunes. Calm and collected, she never answered but simply to the fact, and never alluded to the extraneous abuse with which she was loaded. The President of the court on all occasions, and in every question put to her, showed himself her decided enemy, and abused her previous conduct and supposed opinions throughout the whole examination. She remained unmoved except by the horror of an insane accusation, which the wretches who made it knew to be impossible: this she repelled with a dignity to which her strong emotion (noticed in the official report of the trial) must have given additional force. Her conduct could not but make a considerable effect on the public admitted to the trial, however little it made on the tribunal. Robespierre is reported to have been so violently angry when he heard of the answer of Marie Antoinette to the infamous accusation of Hébert as to have broken

his plate at dinner, exclaiming, " Cet imbécille " d'Hébert ! Il faut qu'il en fasse son Agrippine, " et qu'il lui fournisse à son dernier moment ce " triomphe d'intérêt public." (1) And we find in a report made to the Jacobin society of the progress of the trial, the whole attempted to be treated with the sort of indifference belonging to an every-day business, " Quant à Marie " Antoinette, ce n'est qu'une femme ordi- " naire, que sa fierté même décèle, et que ses " larmes ont trahies. Elle est prodigieusement " changée." (2)

She received her sentence without emotion, shaking her head only, when asked by the President if she had any thing to say against its execution; and she left the court without uttering a word, or addressing any discourse either to her judges or to the public. This was at half past four on the 16th of October. The very next day, " Marie Antoinette, veuve Capet, en déshabillé " piqué blanc, a été conduite au supplice *de* " *la même manière que les autres criminels.*" (Although in the same official report is mentioned 30,000 men forming " une double haie " dans les rues où elle a passé.") " Arrivée à la

(1) Villate, Causes Sécrètes de la Révolution.
(2) Moniteur, October 29. 1793.

" Place de la Révolution, ses regards se sont tour-
" nés du côté du Jardin National (the Tuilleries),
" on apercevoit alors sur son visage les signes
" d'une vive émotion. Elle est montée ensuite
" sur l'échafaud avec assez de courage. A midi
" un quart sa tête est tombée, et l'exécuteur l'a
" montrée au peuple au milieu des cris long-tems
" prolongés, de Vive la République!"

No account of the Queen's last sufferings can be so affecting, nor do her so much honour, as this statement by her murderers. The same Moniteur which records this cruel and senseless triumph over a great, a fallen, and a helpless victim, condescends to announce the punishment of eight days' prison inflicted on a ci-devant gend'arme, "Pour avoir trempé son mouchoir dans " le sang de la veuve Capet!" (1)

No wonder that a proud and high-spirited people should wish to shake off any part of the weight of degradation which fell on the whole nation during the three long years of the reign of terror. No wonder that they wish to confine the atrocities and the follies (for they remained inseparable) which stain this disgraceful period to a few individuals, sold to foreign influence, and the general acquiescence of the country to a

(1) Moniteur, October 27. 1793.

combination of circumstances. This combination will be found to resolve itself into what we have already mentioned as the more than efficient causes of the national disgrace, — the previously-degraded political existence of a people, remarkable for the quickness and mobility of their feelings, and the talents and ambition of the middle orders of society, who, unprepared by any previous education for the exercise of civil liberty, found themselves suddenly in possession of absolute power. This quickness and mobility of feeling, which often originated, and in every instance increased, the evils of the Revolution, was likewise the cause of those sudden and momentary returns to humanity which sometimes illumed the blackest periods of its history. Some bold reply, some flash of heroism, struck the giddy minds of their murderous mobs, or more murderous juries, and gave them back for a moment to mercy, although not to common sense.

The same habits of thoughtlessness came to the aid of their oppressed victims. In the crowded prisons and houses of detention where the fatal sledges came every day to take a part of their inhabitants to the certain death then implied by trial before the revolutionary tribunal, the remaining inmates diverted their attention from their own impending

fate, and from that of their companions, by making epigrams on their persecutors, by music meetings, by singing, and every other amusement of which a large society was capable.

This animal courage, for surely it deserves no better name, has been celebrated by their writers more than it would seem to deserve. One of their historians, the most devoted to what was then nick-named liberty, himself an agent and a victim of the demagogues of the day, after coolly reporting contemporary horrors, seems to be insensible of the character he imposes on his country, when he says, " Le peuple, prisonnier ou " non, mais asservis sous une tyrannie épouvant- " able, sembloit jouir avec ses chaines. On le for- " çoit, pour ainsi dire, à rire de son esclavage."(1) A nation which plays with its chains, and laughs at its own slavery, has much to learn and much to suffer before it can be capable of freedom. Had we laughed at ship-money, and satisfied ourselves with epigrams on the five members of the House of Commons demanded by Charles the First, he would have reigned in uncontrolled power. Had we taken Cromwell's major-generals and military division of the country as a joke, we, like France, might have been liable

(1) Dulaure, Esquisses Historiques, tom. iv. p. 69.

to the prolonged establishment of a military despotism. Had we trifled and diverted ourselves with the awkward strides of James to arbitrary power, we should never have attained the honour of resisting that power, which all but crushed Europe under the iron arm of Buonaparte.

The distinctive peculiarities of the French character were never more remarkably exhibited than during the different phases of their eventful Revolution. Extremes of the most opposite qualities seemed often to meet in their mind, and a strange and unnatural alliance to have taken place between thoughtless frivolity and premeditated crime.

After the acceptation of the constitution of 1793, and the attempted establishment of a republican government, the manners, dress, phraseology, names, amusements, all partook of the exaggerated spirit of the times. The same absence and neglect of moral truth which had necessitated the destruction of the old government, founded on the false principles of arbitrary power, now undermined every attempt to establish another, founded on the true principles of civil liberty. The conduct of the demagogues, who successively floated at the top of this incongruous mass of matter in violent fermentation,

was an exaggeration of their own exaggerated opinions.

A St. Just, adopting the most extravagant paradox of Rousseau, professed to believe men to be only happy in a savage state, living in huts and forests; and avowed the design of endeavouring, by the extermination of a great majority of the present generation, and by the destruction of all the institutions of civilisation, to restore mankind to that desired state.

A Chaumette and a Hébert insisted on the Bishop of Paris and his chaplains, under pain of death, abjuring publicly the Christian religion, and all their functions, at the bar of the National Convention (1); and on the same day a vote is passed in the Convention, declaratory of their non-belief in the existence of a God, and choosing a committee, to report on the means of sub-

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(1) The speech of Gobel, the revolutionary Bishop of Paris, on this occasion, as given by Dulaure, does not, after all, announce his disbelief in the doctrines he had preached, but his adhesion to the will of the people, in ceasing his functions, as his first and paramount duty. In the same sitting of the convention, however, another priest (not of the clergy of Paris) declares directly, "Que la religion "qu'il professoit depuis son enfance, n'avoit pour base que "l'erreur et le mensonge."— *Moniteur*, November 10. 1793.

stituting the public worship of reason in the place of any other rite.

A Couthon and a Collot d'Herbois undertook by a commission from assembled France, in her National Convention, to destroy and annihilate the city of Lyons! The Convention thought, or pretended to think, and the wretches they employed believed, that to annihilate a city of above a hundred thousand industrious inhabitants, which had subsisted for eighteen centuries, was as much within their power as within their will. (1)

Now that time has somewhat softened the feelings of horror excited by these insane intentions, and by the savage means used to put them in execution, we look back with undivided surprise to their *excessive folly;* and our astonishment is as much excited by the political ignorance and cowardice of the persons who ac-

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(1) Great re-unions of men in cities are no more to be dispersed than to be assembled by the breath or the arm of arbitrary power. Catherine the Second of Russia, in her pompous journey to the Crimea, founded cities every day. The Emperor Joseph of Austria, her companion and assistant, aware of the nullity of their proceedings, remarked on one of these occasions, that he, as well as the Empress, had completed a great work on the day he spoke, as she had laid the *first* stone of a city, and he the *last*.

quiesced in such measures, as to the presumption of the monsters who undertook their execution.

In the midst of these sombre and appalling crimes, which seemed to cloud the whole horizon of human existence, and at the same time to attempt destroying all hopes of any other; surrounded by such circumstances, and occupied by such considerations as might well be supposed to engross the whole ideas, both of the actors and of their victims; we find the same persons, at the same moment, engaged in converting the church of Notre Dame into a theatre, where, with the decorations, the machinery, and the actors of the opera, they celebrated the first institution of *La fête de la Raison*, and the dedication of the church to the worship of this metaphysical abstraction. As the fête had taken place by order of the Municipality of Paris, all of whose members had assisted at it, and on the very day that the Convention had been occupied in receiving the abjuration of the bishop, and voting the abolition of the Christian religion (1), a second *Feast of Reason* was acted over on the evening of the same day, for the especial benefit of the members of the Convention.

These members of the Convention, who were

(1) November 10. 1793.

all either accusers or accused, and were falling in succession under the guillotine which they had prepared for their neighbour — these men were employed changing the names, they none of them could hope to bear long, from the Christian appellations of John, James, and Peter, to those of some sage or hero of antiquity. (1)

France was full of Aristideses, Anaxagorases, Fabriciuses, and Brutuses, habited in pantaloons, in short waistcoats with sleeves, and without a coat, called *à la Carmagnole* — their hair cut short, a scarlet night-cap on their heads, a club stick in their hands, to which those who

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(1) The names of all the towns, villages, and streets which recalled any title of the abolished government, or any saint of the abolished calendar, were likewise changed to some republican designation, like *Villeneuve le peuple*, &c. A witness on a trial, and this witness a minister of finance, begged to be allowed to conceal his Christian name: on being told it must indispensably be known, he replied, " Je " le profère à regret ce prénom, *c'est Louis.*"

The inhabitants of the valley of Montmorency beg to represent to the Convention, " Que toujours plein du sou- " venir touchant de l'immortel auteur d'Emile et du Contrat " Social, ils demandent que le nom de J. J. Rousseau, ou de " ses ouvrages, soit ajouté à celui de leur ville. Votre comité " a pensé que c'étoit une occasion de faire disparoître un " nom qui rappelle des idées de royauté et de féodalité, en " conséquence il vous propose, de décréter que cette ville au " lieu du nom de Montmorency prendra, ainsi que la vallée, " le nom d'Emile." — *Moniteur*, October 29. 1793.

were disposed to foppery in this costume added sabots.

The women were obliged by a decree of the Convention to wear the national cockade ostensibly on their hat or cap, without which they could not be admitted into any place of public resort. Their hair, undressed, was left to fall on their back, and was combed flat on their forehead; rouge was entirely banished (1); any body daring to wear it in public would have drawn on themselves the opprobrious title of a *muscadine*, and the penalty of abuse (if nothing worse) attached to it.

As it was, the women seem to have sometimes exercised a too severe police over the dress of their own sex; for we find in the Moniteur of the 29th October 1793, " On admet à la " barre une députation de citoyennes, qui pré- " sentent une pétition par laquelle elles se " plaignent de femmes prétendues révolution- " naires, qui ont voulu les forcer à porter le " bonnet rouge. Elles demandent la liberté de " leur costume." Their demand was granted; a

(1) And, happily for female beauty, has never been restored to the excess to which it had been carried, when a round splotch of red on each cheek, however naturally blooming, was considered as a necessary part of full dress.

more serious discussion having taken place about the same time in the municipal council of Paris, whether the constituted authorities of the country were alone to wear the red cap, or whether its use was to be permitted to all the world. The privilege was made general by the same council, who had the day before issued a formal decree against the black wigs *à la Jacobine.*

At these fooleries their sober neighbours across the Channel looked with contempt, and could not persuade themselves, that a representative assembly, debating on such trifles, and a people occupied in them, could ever effect any thing really great. They therefore beheld with astonishment their armies conquering, and their principles spreading every day. The aristocracy of England, taking up the matter with all the serious earnestness which belongs to the national character, began to deprecate the possible effects of a threatened invasion, and of a democratical revolution in the English government. The severe pecuniary sacrifices required in support of the successive alliances against France had, indeed, excited much ill-will among those who had little property to defend, and became matter of most serious import to the whole nation.

CHAPTER IX.

STATE OF ENGLAND FROM THE PEACE OF AIX-LA-CHAPELLE TO THE BEGINNING OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.— ACCESSION OF GEORGE THE THIRD — HIS EARLY CHARACTER AND CONDUCT. — PROSPEROUS STATE OF THE COUNTRY. — AMERICAN WAR, ITS EFFECTS. — MR. PITT — HIS CHARACTER — HIS CONDUCT RESPECTING THE FRENCH REVOLUTION. — ITS SOCIAL AND POLITICAL EFFECTS ON ENGLAND. — MR. FOX — HIS CHARACTER AND THAT OF ENGLISH SOCIETY AT HIS FIRST ENTRY INTO PUBLIC LIFE.

From the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, in 1748, the political history of England for the next forty years, till the dawning of the French Revolution, 1788, however diversified by the usual alternations of peace and war, presents few facts materially interesting to the sober eye of posterity. War, although ennobled by individual heroism, was marked by unnecessary defeats, and inconclusive victories; and peace, by political blunders and party intrigues, often contemptible in their means, insufficient in their end, and sometimes disastrous in their consequences. The good elicited from this condition of society was (as it

often happens in the affairs of men) quite independent of the intentions or the powers of the principal actors. Thus the American war, that infatuated struggle to prevent the only connexion of the mother country with her colonies of which their mutual relative situation could then admit, ended by securing, together with the independence of America, that connexion between the two countries the most essentially advantageous to both. Thus the folly or ignorance of a minister of the crown, in taking notice of the ephemeral writings of a profligate individual (1), during a time of great party violence, produced a new security to the personal liberty of the subject,—a judicial declaration of the illegality of general warrants against the persons and papers of individuals, without specifying particularly the cause of their arrest. We cannot have a stronger proof of the absence of all really great interests, and of the violence with which party feelings at this time pervaded all classes of society, than the popularity and fame acquired by another occasional writer, whose libels, from being clothed in pure, strong, and condensed language, have survived their day. The Letters of Junius may still be consulted with advantage by those who

(1) John Wilkes.

wish to form to themselves a correct and forcible English style. But the subjects of complaint they denounce, their imputations on ministers, and the characters both that they attack and that they advocate, appear to us equally unworthy of the emphatic terms in which they are denounced, and of the magnifying glass applied to their consequences. Of one thing, however, they may satisfy us,—that as long as we preserve a constitutional monarchy and a popular government, no advantages of peace, no successes of commerce, no individual superiority of character, will ever lull to sleep the many watchful eyes that are always intent on the conduct of the party in power, and ready to take advantage of the first improper bias in their government.

A young king and queen had lately ascended the throne. To the great expectations always formed of a new government were in this instance added the hopes of all the social world, that a decided and desirable change would take place, from the dull habits of an old German Prince, to the gaiety of a young court, willing to give and to receive amusement. In these expectations every one was disappointed.

George the Third had been educated by his mother in a retirement ill suited to form the manners or cultivate the character of the head

of a popular government. He had not been allowed to make acquaintance with the young men his contemporaries, with whom he was necessarily to act, and by whom he was in future to govern. His mother, the Princess Dowager of Wales, although (as she tells Doddington) sensible how necessary it was that her son should keep company with men, knows not to whom to address herself. "What company could she "wish him to keep? What friendships desire "he should contract? Such was the universal "profligacy, and such the character and conduct "of the young people of distinction, that she "was really afraid to have them near her chil-"dren!" (1)

She seems not to have been unaware of the domestic and (if we may be permitted the word) *homely* character of her son; for in speaking to Doddington of a marriage likely to have been proposed for him during the life of his grandfather, George the Second, she again adverts to the necessity of his mixing in the world; that the marriage would prevent it; that "he was "shy and backward; the match would shut him "up for ever with two or three friends of his, "and as many of hers * * * * * that he was not a

(1) George, Lord Doddington's Journal, p. 290.

" wild dissipated boy, but good-natured and " cheerful, with a serious cast upon the whole; " that those about him knew him no more " than those who had never seen him; that he " was not quick, but with those he was ac- " quainted applicable and intelligent." For such a character, in any other condition of human life, education might have done much; but George the Third entered on his reign with the shyness of a school-boy in his manners, and reserve and suspicion in his mind. This prevented the possibility of his acquiring, by the habits of society and the practice of business, that knowledge of the world which might have supplied the deficiences of his education. Married within a year after his accession to the throne, to a princess as young as himself, and still less accustomed to the great society in which she was called to preside, it was not in little parties made up of their own household that they could acquire a taste for the gaieties becoming their age and their station, or manners, that could ensure them popularity in their capital.

Balls, such as those recorded by Horace Walpole in the first year of their marriage, " con- " sisting of not above twelve or thirteen couples, " some of the lords of the bed-chamber, most

"of the ladies the maids of honour, and six "strangers. Nobody sat by but the Princess "(Dowager of Wales), the Duchess of Bed- "ford, and Lady Bute: they began before seven, "danced till one, and parted without a sup- "per." (1) Such balls must have given more offence to the many excluded from them, than pleasure to the few invited. As private individuals, their lives were not only blameless, but exemplary. Happy in each other, and in the interest of a yearly-increasing family, they seem to have considered public business and public representation as a heavy tax imposed on their station, instead of their being the first and unalienable duties of it. This tax duly paid in two weekly drawing-rooms, and two yearly balls, the rest of their time was spent in a retirement which few of their opulent subjects were disposed to share with them.

The court, instead of being looked up to by the young as a source of gaiety, by the handsome as a scene of triumph, and by the fashionable as necessary to the confirmation of their pretensions, was soon voted by all a duty, which was performed with a sort of contemptuous reluctance; a duty which in certain situations

(1) Letters to G. Montague, p. 267.

of life it was necessary to pay, but from which they no more thought of deriving amusement than from a visit to their grandmother. No fashions emanated from a court, itself an enemy to show, and avoiding all occasions of representation. The Windsor uniform produced none of the effects of the *justaucorps bleu* of Louis the Fourteenth. To be distinguished by the sovereigns, and to form a part of their small domestic circle, was considered as a sort of superannuation in the gay society of the metropolis. The young, who from the political situation of their parents were sometimes called to join it, escaped from the honour when they could, and never thought of founding their claims to success in the fashionable world on any reputation of favour at court.

It was this early seclusion, and these retired habits, which had encouraged and embittered the charges of favouritism and back-stairs influence, that so soon overcast the bright morning of the reign of George the Third. It was his singular fate, after having been (undeservedly) a most unpopular prince during his youth, to have entirely regained the affections of his people in after-life, without any change whatsoever having taken place either in his principles, his character, or his manners.

When disease had created an excitation of spirits, and a love of public exhibitions and shows, which sat awkwardly on his age, the nation saw it with surprise, and those immediately interested in him with sorrow and regret. Still, such was the effect of a long life unsullied by any moral stain, by any selfish expenditure of public money, or any premeditated attempts at unconstitutional power, that his first recovery of reason, after a long alienation of it, was hailed as a national blessing; and his final seclusion, and the cessation of his moral existence, lamented as a national misfortune.*

The issue of the attempt in favour of the house of Stuart in 1745 had relieved us from any further contest for the throne. The conditions of the peace of 1763, however inferior to the exaggerated pretensions that the last year of the war had suggested, were such as left us all, and more than all, the jealousy of France and her great natural means would have allowed us to retain under any other circumstances than those in which she was placed.

These advantages, protected by our free government, and secured by habits of order, industry, and public faith, threw great property into the hands of so many, that habits of expence became general. Sums unheard of before

were laid out on houses, and gardens, and furniture. Prices unknown in other countries were given for objects of luxury. Thousands were expended and were betted on horses. Gaming of every description took place on a scale unexampled in former times. An interchange was established between Paris and London of the mutual follies of each country. Together with an admiration of our political establishments and our parliament, our liberty of the press and our juries, France adopted our horse-races, our carriages, our saddles, and our morning dress; while we, with less reason, and less candour, continued affecting to despise the people whose fashions we implicitly followed in every article of ornamental luxury, and whose language became necessary to us, as their literature became universal. So far from the desire, since so often unavailingly expressed, of being admitted into French society, persons used then to boast of their intention of going to Paris, merely to look at pretty things, and to make expensive purchases, determined to avoid having any thing unnecessary to do with the natives.

Our young men inundated Europe. Every one supposed to receive the education of a gentleman was now sent abroad after he had left

college, often attended by some guardian of his conduct and morality, to whose care they had been committed at Oxford or Cambridge. Out of the precincts of his college, the tutor was often as ignorant as his pupil: the first lived in no society at all, and the latter in bad. The large allowance of money, made to many of these young tourists by their parents, not only frustrated the hope of their taking any trouble to gain admittance into good company, but often exposed them to the danger of becoming the dupes of improper companions. Pope had already adverted to such travellers in his day, as worthy a place in the Dunciad, where he makes his goddess thus describe them:

"Led by my hand, he saunter'd Europe round,
"And gather'd every vice on Christian ground;
"Saw every court, heard every king declare
"His royal sense of operas or the fair;
"Tried all *hors-d'œuvres*, all liqueurs defined,
"Judicious drank, and greatly daring dined;
"Dropp'd the dull lumber of the Latin store,
"Spoil'd his own language, and acquired no more."

Dunciad, Book iv.

To all these habits of extravagant expenditure, the American war (which absorbed all the redundancies of the anterior peace) put a stop. No more was heard of fêtes champêtres costing 15,000*l.*; no more of kitchen-gardens, whose

yearly expence was 6000*l.*; no more of bills with tailors for thousands; no more of sums so great and property so considerable depending on the cast of a die, that the gainer dared not profit by more than half of his good luck.

After the peace of 1783, which assured the independence of America, the nation had returned (according to the old proverb) by poverty to industry, and by industry once again to the wholesome enjoyment of well-acquired riches, when an attack on all property was sounded so loudly and so near, that the "*proximus ardet Ucalygon*" might well frighten those, who in the quiet possession of what remained to them from their ancestors, or what their own exertions had acquired, felt they had little to gain and every thing to lose by a change.

The French Revolution found England in a state of unexampled prosperity. To the amputation of her American colonies, which the empirics to whose counsels she trusted had laboured with idiot obstinacy to prevent, her enemies had obliged her to submit. To her enemies, therefore, and not to her own resolution, she owed the immediate and rapid recovery of her political strength, which took place from the peace which declared the independence of America.

The councils of England were from that period directed by a man not less remarkable from his abilities, than from the times in which he was called on to exert them; not less distinguished by his inheritance of the talents of a statesman, than for his own early display of them.

Mr. Pitt, at the age of twenty-three, unsullied by the vices, and unoccupied by the follies of his age, was almost at his first outset in political life placed at the head of the government of his country, during a period of peace and prosperity. He was soon surrounded in parliament and in society by his contemporaries at college, who in their own or their parents' estimation were all incipient statesmen. Tattersall's and Newmarket were neglected for White's and the House of Commons; and every day produced new prodigies, who were already great orators at Eton, and profound politicians before they left Christ Church or Trinity. A fashion, for a fashion it became, which encouraged occupation and mental acquirements, and depreciated trifling or popular amusements, certainly favoured those habits of domestic order and private virtues which seem peculiarly to belong to the sober, serious mind of the English nation.

On this score, we have more obligation to

the character and long public career of Mr. Pitt, and to its effects on his contemporaries, than will be owned, or probably will be perceived, till the events of his political life, and the prominent features of the times to which he belongs, are viewed in a more distant perspective.

But here, alas! the good effects of the emulation he excited will be found to cease. To his young associates it was easier to be foolishly bustling than to be seriously employed; to affect financial jargon than to acquire clear ideas of finance; and to make long speeches than to possess that fund of matter and that power of words which distinguished the flowing, inexhaustible, although often inconclusive, eloquence of their model. Unfortunately, too, for them and for himself, this model, from his early immersion in public business, from his never having been a spectator, but always an actor on the great theatre of the world (perhaps, too, from his home education), seldom recurred, in his measures, to those enlarged views of human policy, to those first great principles of mutual obligation, on which all human contracts must be founded or must fail. He seemed rarely to calculate what was or what was not abso-

lutely due to expediency in the application of these principles to the conduct of the affairs of men. The whole history of his long administration is a series of proofs of these deficiencies, in spite of his great and splendid talents, his powers of thought and combination, and all the inspirations of his high-minded ambition. Hence proceeded his defective judgment of the real relative situation of his country, with respect to the other nations of Europe. His friend (1), in defending his memory, declared, that his last continental confederacy against France "was one of the most splendid efforts "that ever emanated from the human intellect "for the salvation of Europe." His friend believed what he said; Mr. Pitt believed it also; it was neither ambition nor interest that thus blinded him, but a neglect to combine, or an inability to calculate, those great leading motives, which have in all times with a varying but inevitable force acted on the minds of men.

To this neglect or inability was united an ignorance of the personal and individual peculiarities of the characters successively influencing the destinies of Europe. With his

(1) The late Lord Londonderry.

powerful talents and sagacious intellect, such ignorance could not have existed had he ever lived in any society but a *ministry* or an *opposition*, or had ever travelled farther than from Downing Street to Holwood. Thus, unacquainted with other countries, and wholly absorbed in wielding the powerful means of his own, the French Revolution burst on a statesman peculiarly ill-fitted to calculate either the sufficiency of its causes, the momentum of its present effects, or the magnitude and extension of its consequences.

Two opinions soon manifested themselves in England on the subject: the one considering the French Revolution as the dawning of a more perfect system of political existence over all the world; the other, as an open attempt at the subversion of all established institutions. To the first party, England appeared tottering on its basis; and viewed by the dazzling light of the new philosophy, seemed to present only the corrupted, shaken, and exhausted remains of that admirable constitution apparently made for eternity, — which, with every means of self-correction and principle of renovation within itself, thus perishing of caducity in little more than a hundred years after its complete establishment, appeared only to offer a new assurance

of the impossibility of permanence to any institution of man.

It soon became matter of difficult determination how to deal with the ardour of the moment. The minds of all the thinking classes of men seemed to be undergoing some great change, and some new system of social order to be struggling into existence, opposed by all the obstinate rancour of prejudice, and encouraged by all the heedless enthusiasm of novelty. Under these circumstances, the course to be pursued by government through the contending opinions of the day, and the aid to be afforded or the resistance opposed to the party already acting on these opinions in France, became a great question of national policy. Mr. Pitt conceived it necessary to stem the torrent of popular feeling. The consequences were, a reaction so violent, that England owed its internal tranquillity during these times much more to the suicidal efforts of liberty at her first appearance in France, than to any of the measures adopted to prevent her excesses being copied at home.

Opinions, which attacked not only the administration but the existence of all monarchical government, were no longer confined to theory and to the obscurity of speculative politicians,

but walked forth in broad day, and were heard in our streets and highways. All princes indiscriminately, together with all their ministers and adherents, were designated as malevolent beings, whose evil desires were only bounded by their contemptible faculties. To submit to their government, to receive their orders, or to execute their will, was considered as disgraceful to the dignity of man. From the degradation induced by the long habit of such abuses, recovery could only be effected by a total change in every thing comprehended in the political existence of mankind ;—by obtaining a more equal division of property, a perfect equality of rights, and a new system of their administration.

The jargon of revolutionised France, on subjects of which her former language afforded not even the terms, was adopted by Englishmen, to whom nothing new could arise in political discussion. If the fever of the times had allowed them to consult the remonstrances of the parliaments of Charles the First, they would have found they had nothing either to learn or to borrow on these subjects, whether treating of general principles or of their particular application : but in the universal epidemy which now prevailed, all precedents were despised, and all experience rejected.

When France declared the *Rights of man*, abolished arbitrary imprisonments, destroyed the buildings appropriated to their use, and insisted on the establishment of a representative government, England went hand and heart with her in her innovations. But when she dipped her hands in blood, " cried havock, and let slip the " demon of anarchy and individual vengeance under the mask of public virtue, England stood aloof, and rejected her offered fraternity.

At a former period of our history, the violent measures taken by Louis the Fourteenth at the revocation of the edict of Nantes had served to ripen and confirm the necessity of the Revolution of 1688; so now the atrocious violences which accompanied the progress of the French Revolution eventually served to steady and strengthen the established government of England.

It remains yet a question for history to determine whether the armed opposition of the government of England, and her hostile confederacies with the other nations of Europe against the revolutionary doctrines of France, were necessary to prevent their dissemination at home; — whether the intervention of strangers, the imprudent declarations of foreign sovereigns, their threats, uttered in defiance of certain measures, and Europe combined in arms to force its

decisions on a great and powerful country, did not materially contribute to the monstrous excesses into which that country soon fell, the monstrous doctrines which her leaders soon announced, and the universal rebellion to which her public language excited ; — whether France left to herself, unthreatened, unprovoked, unattacked, would not have satisfied herself with such changes in her government, as would not have cost the life of her least offending monarch, nor produced the hideous crimes which preceded and followed his death ; — whether in case of the continuation of political disturbances in France, and anarchy and confusion still arising from her ill-directed efforts, such a state would not have been less dangerous, less prejudicial to that of all the other members of the European republic, than attacks which served at once to combine the strength of France, to exhaust that of her opponents, and to save her national character from the degradation into which her excesses had plunged her ; — finally, whether the portentous meteor which at last arose in her stormy atmosphere would ever have extended its baleful influence, so as to have endangered the independent existence of Europe, had her resources not been found exhausted, her leaders discouraged, and her

people discontented by ill-directed and unavailing exertion. The solution of these questions belongs not to the present work, which must confine itself to noticing the extraordinary effects produced on the political feeling and language of England by the state of France. The rapidity of the events to which it gave rise, and their great and immediate consequences, soon left far behind all the prognostics, prophecies, and calculations of the elder politicians of the day, who beheld first with incredulity, then with astonishment, and lastly with terror, the extraordinary scene developing before them. At every new crisis which took place in its bloody and eventful progress, they vainly endeavoured to assure the world and themselves of the impossibility of the continued existence of a country under such and such circumstances, and the necessary and inevitable ruin that must ensue from such and such measures. The proximity of the scene of action allowed these satisfactory visions to be of short duration. From an excess of confidence they ran into an excess of fear. The language of youthful enthusiasm in a country accustomed to a century of constitutional liberty, inflamed and excited in clubs, *They* considered as the voice and sentiments of the English nation, in correspondence and in unison with

the wild declamation and extravagant plans of the neophytes of French independence.

When France with puerile impatience abolished by a single undiscussed vote an aristocracy known only to the lower orders of her society by its privileges and by its insolence, *They* trembled for a peerage, whose equality of rights, and circumscribed privileges, were, like the throne it supported, unrestrained only in the power of doing good. When France, adopting the long-decried nonsense of republican Rome, debated on an agrarian law, in a country where exclusive taxes had made the great landholders invidious to the rest of the people, *They* trembled for the security of property in England, where its more equal distribution and equal burthens had long been the boast of the country. When France, disgusted with the conduct and indignant at the riches of a church, whose highest dignities were almost exclusively bestowed on the younger sons of nobles; a church which had abandoned the simplicity of former times, without abandoning any of the bigotry or puerilities which belonged to them; when France, in the hour of her madness, disgraced herself by allowing a band of apostate priests to throw off in her name not only her religion, but her God, *They* anticipated the destruc-

tion of a church, whose ministers had incurred no opprobrium, and whose dignitaries, at that very time, had been more than half of them raised, by their learning and piety, from the middle and lower orders of society.

Since the last unsuccessful struggle of the house of Stuart, the language of England on subjects of government and politics had been decidedly and generally liberal. Those who continued to act or to think like Tories, spoke like Whigs. Any other language would have been unseemly, in what was called good company, and would have been still more reprobated among the people. All boys left our public schools Whigs; all statesmen professed to be so; ministers refused the designation of courtiers, and courtiers talked of the liberties, the privileges, and the authority of the people, as the foundations on which their own were secured. The rapid progress of the French Revolution entirely changed this language: sentiments that it would have been disgraceful *not* to have professed in a constitutional monarchy, were now stigmatised with the name of democratical.

Mr. Pitt, strongly impressed himself with the supposed dangers of the moment, and taking advantage of the fears it inspired, soon rallied

the great majority of the nation to his opinions, and left those whose sentiments and language remained unchanged, and those (much the greatest number) whose minds were attacked by the epidemical madness of the day, to bear the evil reputation of being enemies to the constitution, to the religion, and to the establishments of their country. The party-spirit unavoidable in a representative government soon numbered all those in the House of Commons voting in opposition to the opinions and measures of the minister among the abettors or approvers of the excesses of France. Pledges of the future intentions of English statesmen were sought for in their opinions on the affairs of a foreign nation, and on the conduct to be pursued with respect to it. Individuals long united, not only in political but private friendship, differed and separated on these points. The all-accomplished mind of Burke, yielding to the fears induced by his too lively imagination, and the horror inspired by crimes which seemed approaching the proscriptions of pagan Rome, raised his eloquent voice, and sounded notes of fearful reprehension to such of his friends as yet supposed any thing but anarchy could ever arise in France, and who saw not in her unopposed career an age of barbarism overwhelming Europe.

Mr. Fox, whose political opinions were considered as the voice of his party, differed from his friend, with a steadiness creditable to his judgment, and with a regret which did honour to his heart. When Mr. Burke thought proper intemperately to renounce his friendship, on account of his opinions respecting France, the members of the House of Commons, where the scene took place, were generally and deeply affected at witnessing the tears of tenderness shed by Mr. Fox for the loss of that friendship; — while he openly and gratefully acknowledged all the advantages his mind had long received from it. (1) He continued to remonstrate in vain against repeated continental coalitions which succeeded only in establishing the military power of France, and weakening the means of Europe to resist her; while England individually lost one by one her allies, who sunk under the exasperated enemy from whom she had vainly promised to defend them.

The capacious mind, enlarged views, and liberal principles of Mr. Fox, having, unfortunately for his country, been generally displayed in the ranks of parliamentary opposition, have

(1) See account of the scene in the House of Commons, in Moore's Life of Sheridan.

left us ignorant of the measures he would have adopted in these difficult circumstances, and whether he would have found it possible to avoid the errors he so ably attacked in his political opponents. He had risen to manhood when the national prosperity of England (as we have already remarked) seems to have had a decided effect on individual character and manners.

A carelessness about money, and a wanton disbursement of it, had become, not only a habit, but a fashion among the young in the higher orders of society. An indulgence in all that money can procure, and a total indifference as to the funds producing it, were considered as the characteristics of a noble, independent, generous mind. The niggard was obliged to affect extravagance, and lovers of order neglect; so general were become habits of unlimited expence. The disorder in which such conduct naturally involved the pecuniary affairs of every one, was to be met with equal indifference; and those who timely stopped in the mad career, or who seemed afflicted by the consequences of not having done so, were equally stigmatised as spiritless, narrow-minded beings.

In such circumstances, a young man endowed with the character and with the brilliant abilities of Mr. Fox, encouraged from his infancy by

fond parents, who justly estimated that character and those abilities, but had neglected all wholesome control over either; such a young man may well be excused on his first entry into life, at an age when most of his contemporaries were still at college, for having plunged deep in the stream of fashionable follies. His manly character, his accomplished mind, his classical acquirements, his taste for poetry and literature, his social talents, his love of pleasure, and, perhaps above all, the unalterable sweetness of his temper, had endeared him to all his intimates at school and at college. The early developement of his political principles, and of his acute, masculine, and conclusive eloquence in their support, secured him the admiration and attachment of all the best understandings and most distinguished characters of his country. Nor can we wonder that thus early remarkable, no less for his abilities and eloquence than for his dissipation and excesses, he should have materially influenced the society in which he lived, and given weight to the opinions which he espoused and the party to which he belonged. This influence was of no wholesome nature. He was imitated in his excesses by those who could copy him in nothing else; and his misconduct encouraged and justified in their own eyes that of hundreds,

whose abilities entitled them to no such indulgence.

To his political party were aggregated those whose follies and extravagance in the outset of life induced them to take refuge under a leader, who unfortunately had lost all right of selection, or reproof. The parliamentary circumstances of the times, which opposed to each other two rival leaders of very different characters, and of well-balanced ability, so increased the social as well as political influence of the popular party, that, on the entry of any young man into life, its attraction was dreaded by all sober-minded parents. Adopting the politics and opinions of those in opposition to the measures of government, was considered by the old and the timid as adopting at the same time the excesses of their leader, and the morals of his associates. He might have been addressed like the frail fair-one of Horace:

> " Te suis matres metuunt juvencis
> " Te senes parci, miseræque nuper
> " Virgines nuptæ, tua ne retardet
> " Aura maritos."

And let it not be supposed that these early excesses had no marked, no decisive influence on his own future fame and character. The time he lost in nightly orgies of play, and the habit of

mind inseparable from such baleful dissipation, prevented his intellect from ever attaining that superiority of perception, and disabled it from that intensity of thought, of which it was so capable.

When his young admirers celebrated the eloquence of a speech in the House of Commons, made after a sleepless night spent at the gaming-table, with no other refreshment to exhausted nature than a wet napkin applied to his heated brow, more intelligent friends lamented having been thus deprived of the inspirations of such a powerful intellect to an unfatigued body and an unharassed mind.

Austerely pure as to political independence, the extravagance of his youth obliged him, in maturer life, to accept of pecuniary assistance from the generosity of his party. A measure which must have been much more agreeable to the feelings of those who proposed than of him who profited by it.

Nor was this the only point in which the tenour of his life and character suffered from the licence of his youth. An unrestrained pursuit of pleasure, which had sometimes trespassed on admissible limits, deprived him of all finer feelings of preference in his commerce with the other sex. The ease of his temper, and the

carelessness of his disposition, seemed to have blunted his natural acuteness on these subjects; and led him to squander away in after life the treasures of an inexhaustibly affectionate disposition with hardly more discretion than he had shown during the ardour of youth.

This culpable carelessness, for culpable it must be called, was not entirely confined to social life. It sometimes influenced his judgment in political measures and appointments, and, as a public man, deprived him of that broad-based confidence in the sober opinion of the majority of his countrymen, which both his principles and his abilities were formed to inspire; but failing to obtain, a colour of faction was sometimes given to an opposition which was generally both wholesome and expedient. The country was thus for long deprived of his public services, not from any want of due admiration of his talents, not from any neglect of the liberality of his political sentiments, but from his reputed moral conduct startling those unequal to embrace the compass of his abilities.

THE END.

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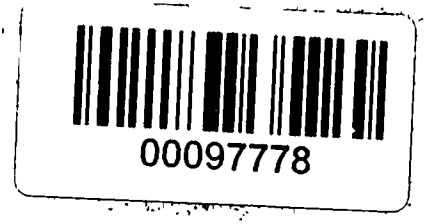
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